

"TO RETURN TO POLAND OR NOT TO
RETURN" — THE DILEMMA FACING
THE POLISH ARMED FORCES AT THE
END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

PhD THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,
SCHOOL OF SLAVONIC AND
EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

199

MARK OSTROWSKI



ABSTRACT

By the end of the Second World War there were nearly a quarter of a million Poles in the Polish Armed Forces serving under British command. Whereas the other Allied armies eagerly anticipated their demobilisation, the future for the Poles seemed far from certain.

On the 20th March, 1946, British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, issued a note to the Polish forces recommending, in the strongest possible terms, that the Poles should return to Poland to help in the country's reconstruction. Indeed some 105,000 took him up on the offer. Some 123,000 did not - a further 21,000 were recruited from Polish communities around the world and they returned home after demobilisation. The key question is why did so many Poles feel unable to return to Poland after the war?

Chapter 1 examines the origins of the "Polish Armed Forces Question" and the legacy of bitterness the war has left, even in present day Poland. Chapter 2 looks at the British reactions to the Poles, particularly the important attitude of the Foreign Office. Chapter 3 deals with some of the decisions made by the troops caught in this dilemma. Chapter 4 examines conditions in post-war Poland, and is linked to Chapter 5 which looks at Warsaw's questionably welcoming attitude to the returning troops. Chapter 6 considers British public reaction to the Poles while Chapter 7 deals with the moves of the British Government to support the demobilised Polish forces and the birth of the Polish Resettlement Corps.

The aim of this thesis is to establish how the troops of the Polish Armed Forces came to the decisions they did and what were the consequences of returning or not returning to Poland.

CONTENTS

Page 2	ABSTRACT
Page 3	LIST OF CONTENTS
Page 5	LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS
Page 6	GLOSSARY/ABBREVIATIONS
Page 10	FORWARD
Page 13	INTRODUCTION
Page 20	CHAPTER ONE : "Our March Is Towards Poland, Whole, Free And Independent." The Origins Of The Polish Armed Forces Question.
Page 39	CHAPTER TWO : "A Choice of Evils." Official British Reaction To The Polish Armed Forces Question.
Page 108	CHAPTER THREE : "Góralu Czy Ci Nie Żal..." The Polish Armed Forces Decide.
Page 152	CHAPTER FOUR : "Ojczyznę Wolną, Racz Nam Wrócić Panie." Conditions In Post-war Poland.
Page 220	CHAPTER FIVE : "The Regime Holds Out Its Hand..." Warsaw's Reaction To The Repatriation Of The Poles.
Page 292	CHAPTER SIX : "Get Them Back To Where They Belong Or Shoot the B-." British Public Reaction To The 'Polish Invasion'.
Page 334	CHAPTER SEVEN : "An Honour To Have Such Faithful And Valiant Warriors Dwelling Among Us." The British Government Plans To Support The Poles.
Page 381	CONCLUSION

Page 385	APPENDIX A : Polish Armed Forces - 1946 Table of Organisation.
Page 391	APPENDIX B : Message from the British Foreign Secretary to all Members of the Polish Armed Forces Under British Command and Statement by Polish Provisional Government.
Page 396	APPENDIX C : Establishment of 2nd Polish Corps in the UK prior to demobilisation.
Page 397	APPENDIX D : Examples of Nazi produced anti-Soviet propaganda.
Page 398	APPENDIX E : Military, civilian and dependants figures for the Polish Armed Forces, May 1945.
Page 400	APPENDIX F : Text of format letter from Foreign Office to answer public anxiety at the arrival of the Poles in the UK.
Page 402	APPENDIX G : "Some of the Cases Illustrating Points Raised in Agenda for the Second Meeting of the Resettlement Committee /Poles/".
Page 405	APPENDIX H : The Face of the Soviet Union before 1941 - British Cartoons.
Page 406	APPENDIX I : The Face of the Soviet Union after 1941 - Altogether more positive images.
Page 408	APPENDIX J : "Report of the Repatriation Poll of Displaced Persons in UNRRA Assembly Centres in Germany for the Period 1-14 May 1946: Analysis of Negative Votes".
Page 409	NOTES
Page 448	BIBLIOGRAPHY
Page 459	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Page 460	Biographical Sketches
Page 463	Chronological Table
Page 464	Corrigenda

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

- Page 9 "Soldier's Day" 20th August, 1993.
Brookwood Polish Military Cemetery, Surrey.
- Page 20 Katyń Memorial, Gunnersbury Cemetery, London.
- Page 39 "Corporal H.J. Jocz. Reserve Unit 1st (Polish)
Armoured Division. Died 20th March, 1946."
Brookwood Polish Military Cemetery, Surrey.
- Page 108 Polish Air Force Memorial. Northolt, London.
- Page 152 "A Hero Of The Struggle For Socialism:
Lt Edward Solarski, An Officer Of The UB In
Nowy Sącz. Born 10th December, 1925. Died On
The 10th July, 1955, In The Fight Against The
Reactionary Underground."
Cmentarz Bohaterów Ziemi Sądeckiej, Nowy Sącz.
- Page 220 "Aleja Generała Władysława Andersa" Nowa Huta,
Kraków.
- Page 292 Memorial at Coolham Advanced Landing Ground
Airfield. Unveiled in June 1995 during the
50th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings.
- Page 334 Grave of General Władysław Sikorski (just prior
to exhumation and ceremonial return to Poland).
Newark Polish Military Cemetery, Notts.

All Photographs : Mark Ostrowski

GLOSSARY/ABBREVIATIONS

AAN	Archiwum Akt Nowych - State Archives, Warsaw (Archive of Modern Records)
ADC	Aide-de-camp
AFHQ	Allied Forces Headquarters (Caserta, Italy)
AK	Armia Krajowa - Home Army
BAOR	British Army of the Rhine
Battn	Battalion
BLU	British Liaison Unit
Brig.	1/ Brigade 2/ Brigadier
CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
CCG (BE)	Control Commission for Germany (British Element)
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
C-in-C	Commander-in-Chief
CMF	Central Mediterranean Forces
CO	Commanding Officer
Div.	Division
DP	Displaced Person
FO	Foreign Office
GHQ	General Headquarters
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GSHI	General Sikorski Historical Institute
HMG	His Majesty's Government
HQ	Headquarters
MEF	Middle East Forces

MI5	Military Intelligence (Counter-intelligence)
MI6	Military Intelligence (Intelligence Gathering)
MI11	Military Intelligence (Field Security)
MO	Milicja Obywatelska - Citizens' Militia
NAB	National Assistance Board
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NKVD	Narodny Komisariat Vnutrennich Dyel - People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs
NSZ	Narodowe Siły Zbrojne - National Armed Forces
OC	Officer Commanding
O.II	see below
Oddział 2	Polish Intelligence/Counter Intelligence (variously "O.II", "Deuxième Bureau" and "Dwójka")
Oddział 6	Polish Special Operations (akin to SOE)
O/R	Other Ranks
PAF	Polish Armed Forces
POW	Prisoner of War (also PW)
PPR	Polska Partia Robotnicza - Polish Worker's Party
PPS	Polska Partia Socjalistyczna - Polish Socialist Party
PRC	Polish Resettlement Corps
PRO	Public Record Office
PSL	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe - Polish Peasant Party
PUR	Państwowy Urząd Repatriacyjny - State Directorate for Repatriation
PWX	Former Prisoner of War
SACCMF	See below
SACMED	Supreme Allied Commander : Mediterranean
SCAEF	Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force

SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force
SIS	Special (or Secret) Intelligence Service (see MI6)
SOE	Special Operations Executive
SPK	Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantów - Polish Ex-combatants Association
UB	Urząd Bezpieczeństwa - Security Office
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
UPA	Ukraińska Powstańcza Armia - Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army
WiN	Wolność i Niezawisłość - Freedom and Independence
WO	1/ War Office 2/ Warrant Officer
WOLS	War Office Liaison Section

"The Last of The War Horses...."
Brookwood Polish Military Cemetery



"Cześć Ich Pamięci!"

FOREWORD

For Lance-Corporal Franciszek Ostrowski it had been a long war. The German invasion of Poland in September, 1939, had left him and his family largely unscathed as they lived in the east, in the area known as the 'Kresy' - the borderland with the Soviet Union. For the Ostrowski family the threat at that time did not come from Hitler but from Stalin and the Red Army. As they occupied eastern Poland the Soviet secret police, the NKVD, began a campaign of deporting Polish citizens to the Soviet Union. Intellectuals, military and police officers and local officials were executed en masse and other Poles were imprisoned across the breadth of the USSR from Kamchatka on the Russian Pacific shore to the deserts of Soviet Central Asia and to the permafrost of Arctic Siberia.

Franciszek Ostrowski was arrested by the NKVD and sent to a Soviet camp near Archangel . where he stayed until 1941. The German invasion of the Soviet Union created a need in Moscow to establish friendly relations with the West so Stalin issued an "amnesty" for the Poles and allowed for the recruitment of a Polish Army under General Władysław Anders. For many of the deportees and their families, Stalin's gesture came too late. Of the nearly two million people sent to the east, about half died. The long railway convoys of prisoners, the cold, the heavy work and the starvation rations all effected a slow

and lingering death. Along the way Franciszek Ostrowski buried his two daughters but his two sons were stronger and they, along with their mother, survived the ordeal. After the "amnesty" he and his family made their way south to the Polish Army recruitment centre in Soviet Central Asia. In March, 1942, he was transported across the Caspian Sea to Pahlevi in Persia where the newly formed Polish Army was being equipped by the British. In Persia the women and children were removed to a network of War Office dependants' camps world-wide - his family went to Tanganyika - while the men prepared for war. The long journeys that many Poles had to undertake to enlist in the Polish Armed Forces earned them the disparaging German title of "General Sikorski's tourists" [1] but when the rearmed Poles met the Germans again in Italy and France the Germans stopped laughing.

In January, 1943, the No. 5 (Polish) Casualty Clearing Station was formed as part of the 2nd Polish Corps and it was here that Franciszek Ostrowski worked. In October the unit was moved to Palestine and the men went to Syria for mountain warfare training in anticipation of their joining the Italian campaign.

No. 5 (Polish) Casualty Clearing Station served at Cassino, the River Rapido, the advance on the Adriatic Coast, the assault on the "Gothic Line", the River Senio and the liberation of Bologna and finally ending the war in Loreto, near Ancona, after having been upgraded to

No. 5 (Polish) Field Hospital.

The Poles in the hospital followed the war closely as the BBC and their own Polish broadcasts kept them aware of the news from home - news that brought little joy to them as they heard about one national disaster after another. The names of Katyń and Yalta became synonymous with the fears that the Polish Army felt for the future. After the hostilities had ended, the Poles were offered the option to return to Poland but only a few availed themselves of the chance immediately. To move things along Franciszek Ostrowski and all the men of the Field Hospital were paraded on the 20th March, 1946, and were handed a note from the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, recommending that they should return to Poland. In fact the note went beyond a recommendation in that Bevin seemed to suggest that it was every soldier's patriotic duty to return to Poland rather than seek help from the British Government.

After the war many Poles returned to Poland - many did not. The decision "to return or not to return" was a personal one made by every Pole and the factors that affected these decisions are the subject of the work that follows.

The choices made by men like Franciszek Ostrowski from 1945 to 1949 affected the rest of their lives and the lives of their families. This is their story.

.

.

INTRODUCTION

By 1945, the British Government widely regarded the Polish Armed Forces under its command as an embarrassment and a liability. Shortly before the 1945 general election, Churchill had promised the Poles that they would be able to stay in Britain after the war if they felt unable to return to Poland. Churchill went on to lose the election but he had committed the new Labour administration that replaced the government to a policy that would lead to a whole string of British foreign policy problems.

The British Government tried to reassure the Poles that they had nothing to fear by returning to Poland. The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, issued a declaration to the Polish Armed Forces in March 1946 that they should return to Poland to help in the country's reconstruction. While publicly maintaining that repatriation would be safe for the Polish forces, Bevin's officials were far from convinced. Despite talk of 'safeguards', the Poles, and many officials in the Foreign Office, knew there was little the British Government could do to protect the Poles from repression by Warsaw's secret police.

Matters were further complicated by the fact that there existed two Polish Governments to deal with. Steering a course between the Scylla of the Moscow-backed regime in Warsaw and the Charybdis of the exiled Polish Government in London, with its ever-decreasing

circle of friends, the British did their best, at first, to be even-handed, but managed to please neither. Despite a perceived moral obligation to the London Poles, policy dictated that the future was with Warsaw and the Communists. Everything possible was done so as not to offend Warsaw and the Foreign Office was forced into all manner of contortions to keep the Communist authorities happy. Even given mass British Government disinformation about the true state of affairs in Poland and the promise of "free and unfettered" elections, many of the Poles steadfastly refused to return.

The British Government recognised that if the Poles refused to return to Poland, then it would have to act to ensure the Poles integrated smoothly into British society and, in particular, into the British labour market. These are the roots of the Polish Resettlement Corps and the origins of the post-war Polish community in Britain.

Amid the clamour that greeted the 50th Anniversary of the Victory in Europe, the voice of Poland was strangely silent in the proceedings. The Polish forces who were such a public controversy in 1945 have melted away from public consciousness and now remain a largely forgotten footnote in the history of the Second World War.

Poland's contribution to the Allied victory has been extensively recorded by the Poles, both in Poland and in exile, yet the English language bibliography is fragmentary, to say the least, and the British public

remains largely ignorant of the true facts. Military historians, as a rule, tend to concentrate more on battles and campaigns than on the demobilisation of armies. The role of the Polish soldiers in Italy and France has been documented in many excellent histories, yet few ever look at what became of the men who fought at Monte Cassino and Falaise. For the Polish forces the story did not stop in 1945 - a fact that is, all too often, overlooked.

The memoirs of the players involved in the story are limited by the same shortcomings that beset the works of the professional historian. The works of former Polish soldiers that have been published in the West invariably pass over the painful post-war years while the works published in Poland over the last forty years have done much the same but for reasons of avoiding political controversy. The collapse of the Communist regime has opened the doors for the soldiers who did return to Poland after the war to record their feelings but, sadly, the passage of time has limited their numbers. To date there are few of these memoirs to be studied and fewer still that chose to discuss the repatriation issue.

The settlement of Poles in Great Britain is also an area that has seen little study in depth. Jerzy Zubrzycki's Polish Immigrants In Britain - A Study of Adjustment (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1956) was the first major work on Polish settlement in Britain. There is also Czajkowski and Sulik's Polacy W W.Britanii

(Instytut Literacki, Paris, 1961, and more recently Sword, Davies and Ciechanowski's The Formation Of The Polish Community in Great Britain (School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1989), the latter being the best on the Polish Armed Forces question. These are three islands in an otherwise barren seascape.

Among the primary sources used in this study, the Foreign Office General Correspondence (FO371) held at the Public Record Office [PRO] has formed the back-bone of the material used. The internal memoranda between the various departments of state show a policy aimed at convincing the demobilised Polish troops to return to Poland despite knowledge of the serious security situation that existed there. The files at the PRO reveal cover-ups and conspiracies at the highest level and a campaign of misinformation aimed at keeping the Poles from settling in Britain. For the cynical historian this provides confirmation that there is no place for honour or morality in realpolitik.

The archives in Warsaw, on the other hand, do not yield the same results as the PRO. The Archiwum Akt Nowych, the main repository for the modern day state papers, is helpful only in what it omits to reveal about the Polish Government's attitude to the repatriation of Polish troops from the West. The papers of the State Directorate for Repatriation [PUR] do not answer the fundamental question of whether the Polish Government in

Warsaw wanted the Polish troops under British command to return to Poland, yet by its actions, it reveals that it probably did not. The correspondence of Major Sałkowski, PUR's man in Italy, clearly reveal his own misgivings about his government's policy and the reports of the representatives of the Ministry of Information and Propaganda show a clear disregard for the welfare of returnees. This only confirms Sałkowski's impression that he was working contrary to someone's hidden agenda. It may be that documents detailing Warsaw's actual position regarding repatriation indeed do exist, they have, to date, still to be discovered.

Another archive providing material is the General Sikorski Historical Institute in Kensington which holds the papers of the exiled Polish Government and the records of the Polish Armed Forces under British command. Since British policy towards the Polish forces was carried out without the exile Government's consent and often without its knowledge, the Polish Government-in-Exile's official state papers are of little use. The war diaries of the various military units, on the other hand, are the best indication of which soldiers returned to Poland and which did not. Many of the diaries, often beautifully bound and illustrated, also give some of the most accurate breakdowns of the number of repatriations after the war and which units had the greatest levels of return. This material has yet to be adequately studied and the diaries

are a valuable historical record, many of which would be worthy of publication.

The public debate that raged in Britain after the war regarding the settlement of the Poles is highlighted in the Parliamentary debates recorded in Hansard. The Labour Government front benches fought against Conservative criticism that they were betraying the Poles in their charge, while at the same time they fought against their own back benches who accused them of jeopardizing relations with the Soviet Union for the sake of, as they saw it, "fascist" Poles. This was a debate that raged among the British public from 1945 and was only superseded by anxiety at the first waves of black immigrants from the Caribbean and the racial tension that erupted in Britain in the 1950s.

- : - : -

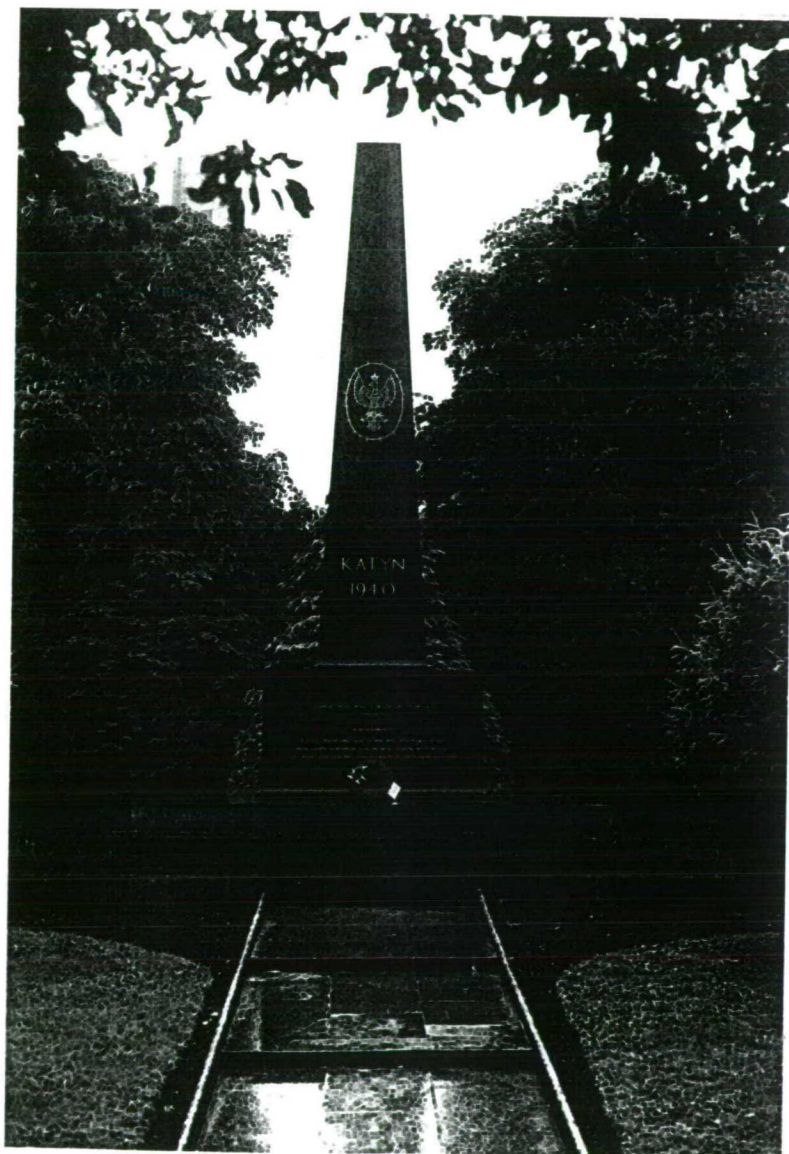
When General Władysław Anders, the commander of the Polish 2nd Corps which fought in Italy, wrote his memoirs he entitled them Bez Ostatniego Rozdziału (Montgomery Printing Co. Ltd, Newtown, Wales, 1949) or "Without A Final Chapter". This thesis, written nearly half a century after Anders' book, is a record of that final chapter of the Polish Armed Forces under British command and of the bitterness that he and many of his men felt - a bitterness that even the passage of time has not assuaged.

.

CHAPTER ONE

"Our March Is Towards Poland, Whole,
Free And Independent."

The Origins Of The Polish Armed forces Question.



Katyń Memorial, London.
Unveiled 18th September, 1976.

CHAPTER ONE

When it comes to histories of the Second World War, every country, inevitably, plays up its own role and its contribution to the overall victory. There are, however, few countries like Poland whose contribution was so great and yet whose contribution has been so forgotten by the world. It is little wonder that fifty years on, the war still evokes much bitterness and pain among the Poles. The Second World War has been a wound in Poland that has adamantly refused to heal.

The treatment of the Polish Forces during and after the war has remained controversial - to the Poles at least. At their height, the manpower of the Polish Armed Forces under British command reached 249,000.

35,000	were evacuated from France in June 1940
1,780	were recruited in Britain
14,210	escaped from occupied Europe
2,290	were recruited from Canada/Argentina/Brazil
83,000	were evacuated from the USSR
89,300	joined after deserting German Forces
7,000	joined from liberated France
21,750	were liberated Polish Prisoners of War [POW]

254,830	
-	
26,830	Killed in Action/Missing/Died of Wounds

228,000	July 1945 (technical close of recruitment)
+	
21,000	former POWs recruited after July 1945
=====	
249,000	[1]

This made the Polish Armed Forces the fourth largest after the Soviet, United States and the British Armed Forces.

When the war began the Poles had to witness two defeats in as many years; In September 1939, German technological superiority won over the Poles. In a bitter and hard fought campaign, the ferocity of which surprised even the Germans, few histories of the war remember more than the apocryphal stories of Polish cavalry charging German tanks, fewer still give more than a passing word to the other invasion of Poland from the Soviet Union and its effect of dashing any hope of a Polish stand in the east.

Arguably Poland's greatest contribution to the final victory over the Nazis was the presentation to the British and French Governments of "Enigma" decoders which helped the Allies read German coded messages. Just before Poland fell to the Germans, the Polish intelligence service managed to smuggle two machines out of the country and Polish cryptologists helped in the decoding of the high-level German communications that is now recognised as being crucial to the outcome of the war.

Thousands of Polish troops escaped their country and made their way to France - the traditional home of the Polish exile - and set up an exile Government at Angers. The army and air force were reformed and placed under French command.

When the Poles took to the front to defend France they manned two full infantry divisions with a further two in the process of being formed - an independent Highland Brigade and an armoured brigade under General Maczek. The

Polish Air Force in France consisted of two fighter squadrons, with a further two in training but when the Germans invaded France, the French collapse was as swift as the Polish one and, some might argue, less creditable.

The Poles took part in the abortive invasion of Norway, landing the Highland Brigade at Narvik, but as that joint British and French campaign collapsed, the allies were evacuated - the Poles were returned to France only to be captured defending Brest. Of the Polish Armed Forces in France, only some 20% were evacuated to Britain to fight again. Of those who were left behind, many Poles set up independent Polish underground units in France but most, however, went into German captivity.

The Polish Government-in-Exile reformed for a second time, this time in London, just in time for the Battle of Britain - another effort where the Poles can claim that their contribution did have an effect on the overall victory in Europe. The 71 Polish fighter pilots of 302 and 303 Polish squadrons and the 80 Poles who flew with British squadrons shot down 203 German planes and damaged a further 36. This was over 11% of all enemy planes shot down in the Battle of Britain and at that time the Poles made up the largest contingent of foreign pilots flying with the Royal Air Force.

The Polish Army saw action again in 1941 as the Independent Carpathian Rifle Brigade was moved to Tobruk

in North Africa to take part in its defence, besieged as it was by German and Italian troops. The Poles defended the town for four months alongside the British 70 Division and Czech and Australian battalions until it was relieved by a British offensive.

1942 saw the creation of the Polish Army in the Soviet Union from the over one and a half million Poles who were deported from Poland to all parts of the Soviet Union after its 1939 invasion of Poland. After the German invasion of the USSR, the Soviets found themselves on the same side as Britain and Poland and so issued an "amnesty" for these Poles and allowed recruitment under General Władysław Anders. After much pressure on Moscow, Anders managed to get his troops evacuated to Persia where they were equipped by the British and began life as the Polish 2nd Corps. The Corps took part in the campaign in Italy. It fought at Cassino and hoisted a Polish flag on the ruins of the abbey which it captured; it took Ancona and ended the war by liberating Bologna.

In Britain, General Maczek was given command of the Polish 1st Armoured Division which was sent to France shortly after D-Day. It took part in the drive through Normandy, culminating in the battles of Falaise and Chambois where the Poles cut off the retreat of 60,000 Germans. The Poles were fighting as part of the Canadian Corps and so the victory was not attributed as a Polish victory but, as a mark of respect, Canadian sappers

erected a sign on Mont Ormel that read "A Polish Battlefield" [2] The Division went on to liberate Abeville, St Omer, Ypres and Ghent. The Poles drove through France and Belgium into Holland where they liberated Breda and then into Germany where the Polish Division accepted the surrender of the port of Wilhelmshaven.

The Polish Independent Parachute Brigade under General Sosabowski had wanted to parachute into Poland to help the ill-fated rising in Warsaw that had broken out on the 1st August, 1944, but were dropped instead at Arnhem as part of operation "Market-Garden" to fight alongside the British 1st Airborne Division and to suffer the same defeat.

The Polish Air Force continued flying throughout the war. In North Africa, Polish pilots flew with 112 "Shark" Fighter Squadron and the "Polish Fighting Team" that was commonly referred to as "Skalski's Flying Circus" after its Commanding Officer [CO]. In Britain, the Poles' two fighter squadrons were increased to seven (302, 303, 306, 315, 316 & 317) and a further one was formed in Italy (318). The Poles flew a night fighter squadron (307), a fighter-reconnaissance squadron (309), two bomber squadrons (300 & 305), a Coastal Command bomber squadron (304), an artillery observation squadron in Italy (663) and a special duties flight (formerly 301 bomber squadron redesignated as 1586 Flight).

The Polish Navy, although small in 1939, was rapidly expanded by the loan of British ships to be manned by Polish crews. Polish submarines patrolled the North Sea and the Mediterranean; Polish warships served in the Atlantic and Murmansk convoys; the Polish Navy saw service in the Narvik campaign, the Dunkirk evacuation, the assault on Dieppe, hunting the Bismark, the invasion of Sicily and the invasion of France on D-Day.

When the war in Europe ended in May 1945, the position of the Polish Armed Forces was unclear. Despite its long struggle alongside the Allies in the name of Poland, it seemed that Poland was far from free. The Red Army, which had come to Poland as liberator, was to stay as conqueror with, it was widely felt at the time, the complicity of London and Washington. Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, formerly a courier between London and the underground Home Army [AK] in Poland, has views on the "victory" that are typical of many Poles:

"Poland conducted two wars with two attackers. We won against the Germans, but lost against the Soviets. May 9 is an anniversary of both victory and defeat, and that is how we should see it." [3]

and of the Soviet guns he heard celebrating the end of the war he writes:

"For thousands of Poles, who had fought heroically for freedom, those triumphant salvos heralded death, torture, prison and persecution."

The Poles felt betrayed. To many Poles it appeared that their interests had been sacrificed to appease Stalin

and whereas the Poles had remained faithful to the Allied cause, the same could not be said of the Allies to the cause of a free and independent Poland.

In August, 1941, Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt had signed what became known as the "Atlantic Charter" - a declaration of war aims and aims for the post-war world. Points two and three read:

"Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to chose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them; [...]" [4]

These fine words were not matched by the outcome of the wartime conferences at Teheran and Yalta, and then at Potsdam. Poland had been consigned to the Soviet sphere of influence and had lost vast tracts of land to the Soviet Union. The Provisional Government in Poland was dominated by a pro-Soviet element that had been imported from Moscow by the Red Army. The Soviet secret police, the NKVD, was detaining and deporting many Poles and while the Western powers were, half-heartedly, demanding elections and democracy in Poland, the Polish troops were in despair knowing that it was already too late and they would not be going home.

On the 50th anniversary of the end of World War Two in May, 1995, the President of Poland, Lech Wałęsa, made a speech to Polish veterans that was filled with the bitterness that Poles feel towards the end of the war:

"Having been invaded in September, 1939, the Poles never laid down their weapons. They fought from the first day of the war until the last. They fought on many fronts, on Polish soil and abroad, for our freedom and yours. They fought at Narvik, in France, in the Battle of Britain, at Tobruk, Lenino, Monte Cassino, in Normandy, in Belgium, in Holland, the Warsaw Rising and the battle for the Pomeranian Wall. Above defeated Berlin only three flags flew - the white flag of capitulation, the red flag and the red and white flag. The Polish Armed Forces were the fourth largest Allied army. Poland never disgraced itself by having a government that collaborated with the fascists. However, our loyalty to the Allies was put to a difficult test.

The information about the Katyń atrocity hit us hard. Ignoring all human and military rights, and on the orders of Stalin and the Soviet leadership, 20,000 prisoners were bestially murdered - the only crime of these soldiers and policemen was that they were Poles. At Katyń, Kharkov and Miednoje the flower of our officer corps was exterminated. This was not an accident; it was not a mistake. It was political genocide, ruthlessly and coldly planned. The Great Powers of the world knew about it. The Allied leaders - they knew and still they said nothing. The larger political interests, the greater game of spheres of influence on the world map covered over these uncomfortable truths. Politics knows no sentiment. For that reason the Warsaw Rising had to fail and that is why at Teheran and Yalta it was agreed that after the war Poland would be in the Soviet sphere of influence. A faithful ally was sacrificed to maintain the world balance of power. On hearing of the Yalta agreement General Montgomery light-heartedly joked to General Maczek that Maczek would now be a Soviet general - a bitter joke.

Let the West and the East not be surprised that even after 50 years this bitterness still gnaws at us. The 8th of May cannot just be a celebration of victory. It is a day of thought and reflection on the lessons of history, on the responsibilities of political leaders and on the future. Every nation has the right to its own appreciation of events. We understand that others might see the past differently... we can not, however, forget the nature of the Stalinist system. It had nothing in common with liberty and democracy. Behind the frontline troops the NKVD entered Poland and, with their Polish supporters, began the persecution of Polish patriots. The Stalinist night descended followed by the drama and farce of the PRL [Polish People's Republic]. We will not be silent about all of this just because it does not fit into someone's concept of history." [5]

Wałęsa went on to say that the Poles did not keep carping on about the war to reproach and upbraid anyone. It was simply to remind people that that was the way it was.

It is little wonder that the rest of the world has forgotten about the Poles. For years in Poland the troops in the West were a forgotten army of whom no one was allowed to speak. General Anders, Sosnkowski and the other military leaders were cast as traitors and fascists. In January, 1945, the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, in Poland, Marshal Michał Rola-Żymierski announced:

"Carrying out the directives of the most reactionary military and political enemies of the Soviet Union, the Sosnkowski-Anders clique from the very beginning decided to fight not against the Germans but against Russia and they tried to bring up their soldiers in that spirit.

The anti-Soviet blindness of these reactionary maniacs who had learnt nothing from the war, as well as the actions of General Anders which were damaging to Polish affairs, had become a source of shame to the Polish uniform." [6]

The Polish Armed Forces in the West were branded with the mark of Cain by the Communist authorities and like Cain they were forced to wander the earth to find a home. If such a powerful representative as Marshal Żymierski could make such a pronouncement about the Poles in the West, then it did not bode well for a future return to Poland.

The casualty figures for the Poles in the West clearly demonstrate that, far from being reluctant to fight the Germans, the Poles threw themselves into battle with an abandon that even impressed the Germans.

<u>UNDER FRENCH COMMAND:</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MISSING</u>
NARVIK	97	189	28
FRANCE	1,330	4,670	Not Known

UNDER BRITISH COMMAND:

<u>POLISH ARMY</u>	LIBYA	156	467	15
	2nd CORPS	2,301	8,543	535
	1st ARMOURED DIV.	1,290	3,823	22
	1st PARACHUTE BRIG.	211	346	173
	COMMANDOS	6	27	-
		-----	-----	---
		3,964	13,206	745
		+		
<u>POLISH AIR FORCE</u>		1,803	1,348	445
		+		
<u>POLISH NAVY</u>		404	191	-
		=====	=====	=====
		6,171	14,745	1,190
		=====	=====	=====

[7]

TOTAL CASUALTIES

UNDER BRITISH COMMAND : 22,106

For years after the war, this effort and sacrifice was ignored and minimised in Poland. The only source of pride that the Poles were allowed to extol were the troops that served under Soviet command. With the change in the political climate this has swung full circle and few now mention the Polish army that helped free Poland of the Germans and then took part in the storming of Berlin.

Since this army was run under Moscow's auspices, its role in establishing a Soviet backed government has led to its efforts being marginalised. This is a fate it does not deserve since its role in the storming of Berlin was an important, if little known, contribution.

The Polish 1st and 2nd Armies comprised of ten full infantry divisions, with another four in training, five artillery divisions, a cavalry brigade, an armoured corps

and an air corps of fighter, bomber and ground assault aircraft. In effect the Poles made up 13% of the manpower and 25% of the independent armoured corps of Soviet General Zhukov and General Koniev's drive on the capital of Germany. The total strength stood near 400,000:

OFFICERS	38,488	
WARRANT OFFICERS	14,166	
NCOs	87,179	
OTHER RANKS	252,238	
AT OFFICERS SCHOOL	336	
CIVILIANS	3,695	
	=====	
	396,102	[8]

When the men of the Polish 1st Division raised the red and white flag over the Brandenburg Gate, they had done so at great cost. In the 22 days of this final offensive, from the 16th April, 1945, to the German surrender on the 8th May, the Poles had lost 7,228 men killed in action. Looked at another way, the Poles in the East lost more men killed in 22 days than the Poles in the West lost in five years under British command. The total casualty figures for the Polish Army under Soviet command were:

	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>MISSING</u>
BATTLE OF LENINO:	510	1,776	765
FORCING THE RIVER WISŁA:	1,092	2,174	1,626
FIGHTING IN POMERANIA (1st Feb-7th Mar, 1945)	4,011	8,353	2,484
FIGHTING FOR KOŁOBRZEG: (8th-18th Mar, 1945)	1,087	3,138	179
ASSAULT ON BERLIN (16th Apr-8th May, 1945)	7,228	17,567	3,765
	=====	=====	=====
	17,478	39,286	9,770
	=====	=====	=====
[9]	TOTAL CASUALTIES : 66,534		

The fighting on the eastern front was on a scale and of a ferocity that was unknown in the West.

The Polish Army under Soviet command has had similar problems over recognition as had the Poles under British command. The military historian Jerzy Poksiński cites Lt-Col Zygmunt Duszyński, the second-in-command of the 3rd Infantry Regiment, 1st Division, who hoisted a Polish flag next to three Soviet ones on Berlin's victory monument - the Siegessäule - in the Tiergarten. The next day it had been taken down by order of the Soviet High Command. [10] However, to give the Soviets credit, when they held their victory parade in Red Square, representatives of the 1st and 2nd Polish Armies were invited to attend and marched alongside the victorious Red Army - this is more than can be said for the British response.

After the British Government decided to switch its recognition from the Polish Government-in-Exile in London to the Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw, it no longer felt obliged to invite the armed forces of the exiled Government to the victory parade that was to be held in London in 1946. Instead it asked Warsaw to send its men to attend. This move not only created a great deal of bitterness among the Poles in the West but brought about an outraged cry of "unfair" from many leading Britons. The day before the parade Harold MacMillan wrote to General Anders:

"I tell you this frankly; that with all the legitimate joy and pride in every British heart will be mingled much sorrow and even shame. My thoughts will be with you and your troops." [11]

As the mood of anger and indignation rose - many saw the invitation of Warsaw's people as the ultimate insult to the Poles in the West - and the British press took up the issue, so the British Government relented and invited a delegation from the Polish Air Force to take part. The airmen who, no doubt would have wanted to march, declined the invitation as the British had not invited the Polish Army or the Navy. As "The Times" reported at the time:

"The Polish Government accepted, but the contingent has not yet arrived. Unfortunately, it seems that none of the Polish servicemen who fought in the West under British command will take part. Polish airmen who took part in the Battle of Britain were invited, but they do not wish to march unless Polish soldiers and sailors of the Western Command can march with them." [12]

The delegation from Warsaw never arrived. Warsaw's military attaché in London, Colonel Kuropieska, was never told why his superiors had decided not to attend. One theory was that it was in protest at the former Polish C-in-C, General Bór-Komorowski, being granted a visa to go to the USA to spread what was seen as hostile propaganda against the Warsaw regime [13]. A more likely explanation is that they were prohibited from attending by political consideration emanating from Moscow.

The only Pole present at the British victory parade on the 7th June, 1946, was Colonel Kuropieska who attended as a diplomatic courtesy. In his memoirs, the colonel describes his overwhelming feeling of disappointment that there were no Poles marching. Although the Poles in the West could be criticised for many things - contends Kuropieska - no one could say the Poles spared themselves on the field of battle. The Poles deserved better than this. [14] While units like the Bermuda Volunteer Rifle Corps and the British Solomon Islands Defence Force were represented at the parade the Poles were not. As Krzysztof Szmagier wrote:

"Those were bitter days for those who trusted the Western Allies.

This atmosphere of irritation - although elegantly formulated - was culminated in two incidents. The first was the failure to invite the Polish Armed Forces to the victory parade in London. Only 15 airmen were invited and they declined to take part. Formally the British were right. It was, after all, after they had recognised the Warsaw Government and had withdrawn recognition from the emigres - but it hurt...." [15]

The second incident was an "oath" made by General Anders a week after the victory parade. This is covered in the next chapter.

The atmosphere of mutual irritation resulted in a great deal of mutual recrimination. When the Belgian towns of Bevernwaas and St Nicolas proposed to present banners to regiments of the 1st Armoured Division who had liberated them, the idea was vetoed by the Foreign Office [FO]:

"In the circumstances we feel that any public ceremonies of the nature contemplated by the Belgian town would be inappropriate at the present juncture." [16]

The key element in the equation was not to offend the Provisional Government in Warsaw and so, by extension, to offend Moscow. The Foreign Office tried to persuade the Belgians to stop the presentation ceremonies or at least to tone them down so as not to draw attention to them. The Polish Armed Forces in the West had become a political embarrassment to be hidden away. In any case the Foreign Office would not agree to General Maczek or the Polish Chief of Staff, General Kopański, attending.

Although the controversial subject of the murder of Polish officers at Katyń often came between those who were prepared to believe the best about the Soviet Union and those who were not, the issue came to public attention again in 1976. Whereas the Poles in Britain had no doubt as to Soviet guilt in the matter, the Labour Government of the day remained, at least publicly, unconvinced. During and after the war pro-Soviet apologists still maintained that Katyń was a Nazi crime and poured scorn on those who believed the German propaganda:

"Did the Polish Government believe this allegation? We doubt it very strongly. [...] Yet the Polish Government ostensibly would have had the world believe that they were prepared to entertain seriously a charge made by the Nazi Government against an allied Government. In our judgement, the Polish Government did not believe this monstrous accusation. They seized on it as a means of blackmailing the Soviet Government." [17]

There seems little doubt that Churchill knew the truth about Katyń but for reasons of maintaining Allied unity he would not openly blame the Soviet Union for the murder. Count Raczynski, Poland's wartime ambassador to London, recounts that Churchill knew full well:

"My feeling was that he understood it fully, as we did. It was obvious that it was a Russian doing. There was not the slightest possibility of explaining it otherwise. So that when we met, soon after the news was released, Churchill said to us, "Oh, the Soviets can be very cruel." So he knew very well." [18]

The Poles erected a monument to the murdered in Gunnersbury Cemetery in north London; the British Government refused to attend the unveiling ceremony on the 18th September, 1976, and forbade any British military representation on the day. [19] This attitude drew angry protests from several quarters. Winston Churchill, grandson of the wartime premier, wrote indignantly in "The Times":

"The unveiling which is to be attended by thousands of British and Polish Comrades-in-Arms, as well as by a representative of the Government of the United States and many members of the Diplomatic Corps, is apparently to be boycotted by the British Government for fear of annoying the Soviet Union. Indeed the Government has gone further: it has refused a military band and forbidden serving officers from attending in uniform. A sad and shameful tribute to the sacrifice of the valiant ally for which Britain went to war in 1939." [20]

Sir John Slessor, Marshal of the RAF, also wrote to "The Times" seething at the British reaction:

"For gross bad manners and craven ingratitude this is surely unbeatable. It is, alas, only one more example of the sort of thing that makes it difficult nowadays to be proud to be British." [21]

This was one more snub in a long line. Even as late as 1984 and the 40th Anniversary of the D-Day landing, the Poles were not invited to take part. Although the British Government had changed its political complexion, the commemoration was turned into a strictly NATO event. Possibly the prospect of having to explain how a one time ally was now, nominally, an enemy might have proved embarrassing so the Poles were ignored completely.

After the momentous events in central and eastern Europe after 1989, it suddenly became politically correct to invite Poles to wartime anniversaries but first the Poles had to hold their own victory parade - the first parade that would see veterans from all the fronts that the Poles fought on marching together in Warsaw. The parade was held on 15th August, traditionally 'Soldiers Day', 1992, in the presence of the Polish President, the Polish Premier and the Polish Chief of Staff.

Poland's role in the Second World War is now beginning to be recognised. Poles across Europe watched with pride as satellite television broadcast the Polish Army marching alongside its former allies at the 50th anniversary of the D-Day landings, Polish ships were represented at the anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic and men of the Polish 6th Air Assault Brigade made a commemorative parachute jump at Arnhem to mark that battle's anniversary.

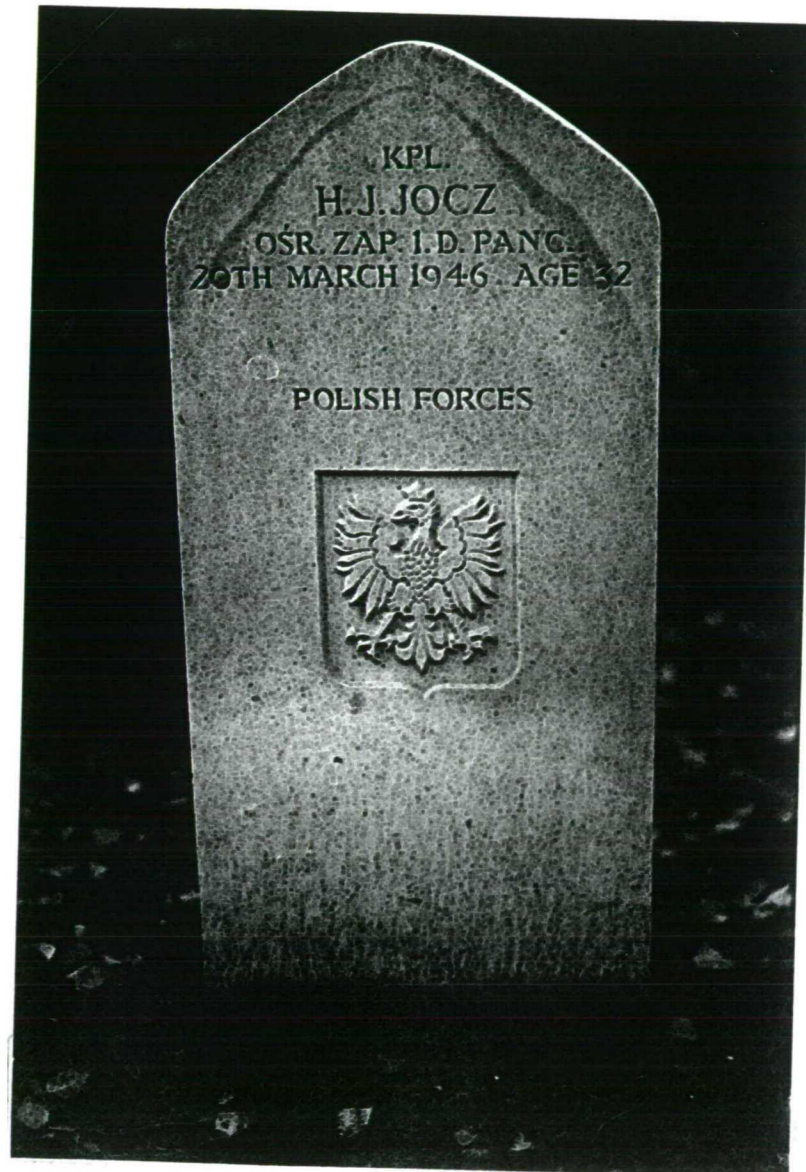
In the autumn of 1994, a platoon of Scots Guards went to Poland to take part in "Co-operative Bridge" - the first joint exercise under the "Partnership for Peace" and the British 5th Airborne Brigade flew to Poland to take part in "Valkyrie Venture" a joint parachute exercise that began to re-establish Poland's place alongside its former allies. [22]

The Poles who fought under British command had been vilified by the Communists in Poland and the response from the British was, at best, cool. The Polish Armed Forces' march "...towards Poland, whole, free and independent" took a long time and it remains difficult to come to a conclusion other than the one reached by John Ellis that, along the way, the Poles had indeed been "shabbily treated". [23]

CHAPTER TWO

"A Choice of Evils."

Official British Reaction To The
Polish Armed Forces Question.



"Speaking on behalf of the British Government, I declare
that it is in the best interests of Poland that you
return to her now...."

Ernest Bevin, 20th March 1946.

CHAPTER TWO

Given that the British Government had decided to recognise the Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw, it seemed only natural to the Government and the Foreign Office that the Warsaw authorities should have some involvement in the whole question of the repatriation of the Polish Armed Forces in the West.

In principle this seemed, at the time, to be a good idea. Some resistance from the Polish Forces was to be expected, and possibly the British military authorities might have something to say about it, but it was considered that anything that helped to remove the Poles from British hands could not be a bad thing.

What the British in London failed to realise was just how resented these Warsaw Poles were by the troops in the field, and just how much of a nuisance they could make themselves.

The British field commanders who had Poles serving under them were painfully aware of a potentially explosive situation which was being laid on their shoulders, none more so than Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean [SACMED], Field-Marshal Alexander. In a note to the War Office [WO] of the

18th August, 1945, Alexander wrote of his worries:

"...I am not prepared to guarantee personal safety of any representative of Polish Provisional Government who may be allowed access to Polish Troops nor am I prepared to answer for the morale or discipline of Polish troops in Italy should any such access be permitted. Morgan [Alexander's Chief of Staff] during a recent interview with Sir Orme Sargent at Foreign Office warned him in this sense." [1]

The War Office reply, although sympathetic in saying that they "Fully appreciate difficulties you mention", still maintained that Alexander would have to obey Government policy whether he liked it or not.

The two men who proved the biggest problem in Italy were Prof. Stanisław Kot, newly named as Warsaw's ambassador in Rome, and Colonel Kazimierz Sidor, the military attaché.

Kot was almost universally unpopular with the Poles in the West. Formerly a member of Sikorski's Cabinet he had served as Minister of Information, an appointment described by Tadeusz Kochanowicz as "unfortunate". [2] There were rumours circulating at the time that it was Kot who was the inspiration of the Polish note to the Geneva Red Cross over the Katyń massacre, with the resulting break in Polish-Soviet relations. A notorious intriguer, Kot, apparently, had a talent for offending people from all sides.

General Anders was certainly of the opinion that Kot was a bad choice. In a report from the Resident Minister's Office, Allied Forces Headquarters [AFHQ], Caserta, to the Foreign Office, 22nd August, 1945, the opinion was put that Kot's appointment was opposed by Anders and that he "would be lynched" by Anders' men if they got hold of him. [3]

Although unpopular, Kot did not present the same degree of annoyance as Col. Sidor who seemed to spend his time in Italy thinking up new ways of giving SACMED a headache.

Described by Dennis Hills, who had first worked with the 2nd Polish Corps and then became a repatriation officer for Russian POWs, as "an elegant colonel who wore a magnificent peaked cap" [4], Sidor was the subject of some heated inter office communication. According to a report from the Liaison Section AFHQ, Sidor had the habit of calling himself the "Chief of the Polish Military Mission for Repatriation, Rome" - as already mentioned he was in fact the military attaché. The principal complaints against him were that he condoned and even encouraged desertion from the Polish Armed Forces. He would employ some of the deserters in his staff in Rome, others he would train to return to the Polish ranks and spy on the high ranking

personnel. The recommendations of the report were threefold: the Foreign Office had to ask the Warsaw authorities to remove Sidor; all the Poles had to be moved to the UK to keep them away from such unhealthy influences; Rome had to be asked to declare Sidor persona non grata. [5]

This was not the first complaint against him. On the 5th February, 1946, General Morgan, the new SACMED who had replaced Alexander, ciphered the Foreign Office with a protest about an interview given by Sidor to the newspaper of the Italian Communist Party "Unita". Morgan pointed out that if Sidor got himself beaten up then he only had himself to blame. Similarly "Unita" might well "go up in flames". The General again requested that Sidor be removed before things got out of hand. If not then SACMED would "disclaim responsibility for any retaliatory measures taken by the troops of the 2nd Corps." [6] The Foreign Office was unmoved by the military point of view and answered that His Majesty's Government [HMG] could not appear to be pro-Anders or anti-Warsaw, therefore Sidor would have to stay. SACMED would have to step up control of the Polish Corps to prevent things from getting out of hand. Doubtless this was not what General Morgan wanted to hear.

The text of the "Unita" interview consisted of

three main points - the accusation that 2 Polcorps was involved in Italian right wing politics and that anyone who volunteered for repatriation among the Polish forces risked disappearing without trace. The third point related to the case of one 2nd Lt. Francziszek Ferenc who had been repatriated from Italy to Poland and then managed to escape and return to Italy. There were in fact nine such Poles with whom the War Office was concerned as the picture they presented of Poland was one that would do little to encourage further repatriation. According to Sidor, Ferenc and the other returnees were "collaborators and Gestapo agents".

Warsaw's attitude to Volksliste Poles is dealt with later; from the British point of view, however, Ferenc was a nuisance they could have well done without. A Top Secret report by Major Shergold, of the 11th January, 1946, tried to work out what motivation Ferenc may have had in his attack on the new Polish regime.

"a/ the fact that he had himself registered in the Volksliste would be held against him;

b/ he was from Feb 43 until Nov 44 a member of the Wehrmacht which would prove detrimental to any career in the new POLAND even if he could prove that he deserted at the first opportunity and was subsequently fighting on the Allied side;

c/ the raping of his wife by a Russian officer and the loss of all his property at the hands of Russian soldiers made him hate anything connected with Russia and the Russians and thus incapable of accepting the official policy of friendship with and gratitude to the Russians." [7]

The War Office decided to wash their hands of this small group of Poles, with the exception of Ferenc. A letter from Lt Col. Hemans of the WO to W.D. Allen at the FO suggests that in the case of Ferenc "some British Army involvement may have been involved" [8] and he should be an exception. The rest would be handed over to the Italian Government to deal with. The Foreign Office agreed to this point: the Poles returned to Italy as civilians and not as soldiers and they could be dealt with as such.

The agitation of the Warsaw Poles in Italy did nothing to endear them to the British. After Major Gawronski, Officer Commanding [OC] AFHQ Liaison Section, submitted a report of his conversation with Kot and Sidor, Hancock of the FO minuted:

"Quite interesting; but both Prof. Kot + Col. Sidor are ruffians and one cannot believe that anything they may say is a sincere expression of their views." [9]

Similarly the agitation of Sidor's mission did little to endear him to the Polish Forces in Italy. According to Czerkowski the mission was so over the top with its calls for the soldiers to attack their 'fascist' officers and to refuse to obey their orders that it put many off, and proved to be counter-productive. Czerkowski says that many soldiers asked their officers as to why they had to

beat their officers up. Had they not gone through the same misfortune and painful wanderings as the other ranks. [10]

Sidor continued to be the major pain in AFHQ's side. SACMED again complained to the FO on the 24th April, 1946. The first repatriation shipment from the camp at Cervinara had been held up largely due to a protest over gratuity payments. Sidor had told the Poles not to board the ships until the matter had been sorted out. Such agitation was guaranteed to raise British hackles.

The meddling of the 'Warsaw Poles' was not confined to Italy. General Paget, C-in-C Middle East Forces [MEF] ciphured London in protest at the actions of Warsaw. Colonel Podwysocki, an officer of the 'London Poles', had been promoted to Major General on the authority of Warsaw and although sympathetic to the new Polish regime he did not want to return to Poland - this caused Paget the problem of pay and seniority. The British could not enforce his promotion to the rank of General as this would risk the morale and security of the Polish troops under his command. The Polish Army in the Middle East on the other hand had no intention of enacting the promotion. Paget's recommendation was that Warsaw should act only among the Poles who had volunteered for repatriation. The Foreign Office

agreed with this view. [12]

The concerns of the Foreign Office were such that on the 24th of August, 1946, Robin Hankey, newly appointed Head of the Northern Department, wrote:

"We must continue to preserve the distinction we have made hitherto:- the Polish Govt. may have access to Poles who wish to return, but we must continue to prevent their carrying out any subversive activities among Polish formations + units under our command. (Warsaw might in certain circumstances be delighted if the Resettlement Corps broke up in disorder!) WO agree this general line." [13]

On the 14th of February a new storm had broken from Warsaw. They had announced that the Polish Armed Forces in the West no longer existed - the troops that had constituted this body would, from then on, have to apply to the Polish Consulate as individuals. This was described by the Foreign Office as "grossly discourteous" [14] in the way they had sprung the news on HMG. In this respect it appears that the Polish (Warsaw) Embassy in London was equally surprised. Colonel Kuropieska, the military attaché, according to his memoirs, was told the news in Warsaw and told he would have to go to London to explain. He even had to break the news to Deputy Foreign Minister Modzelewski, who had read the news in the British Press but had not been officially informed. According to Kuropieska the news came as a bombshell, made worse since

Modzelewski seemed to be making progress on the question of repatriation. [15]

The excuse the Warsaw authorities had used to act in the way it had was apparent obstruction and British stalling on getting the Poles 'home'. On the 20th February, 1946, the BBC monitoring unit picked up a "Proclamation by the National Unity Government to Polish Soldiers Abroad":

"The Polish Government has failed to break down the barriers separating you from the homeland. It has been unable to obtain consent for you to return in battle units. Therefore we appeal to you to return individually. Let every one of you who has had enough of the lies and the instigators of fratricidal struggle and who wants to return home with a clear heart, report to the nearest Polish Consulate, Legation or Embassy, which will do its utmost to get you home." [16]

But the Communist criticism did not end there. A 'Warsaw' news-sheet "Polish Facts and Figures" No.22 from November, 1946, again laid the blame for the slow rate of repatriation to Poland squarely at the British.

"Until October this year, the repatriation, which was entirely in British hands was being constantly delayed, in spite of the continuous flow of soldiers wishing to return and many interventions made by the Polish Government." [17]

The Foreign Office took great offence at these words, Hankey describing them as "Shocking". The Poles had written that they had even begun to work on Sundays to screen Polish troops while it was known to the British that this was no longer the

case.

By the end of November mutual feelings were hitting a definite low; tempers at the Foreign Office were beginning to fray. The acrimony came to a head with a letter from the Polish (Warsaw) chargé d'affaires, K. Lapter, on the 30th of November, 1946, in which he complained that Polish volunteers for repatriation were being used as forced labour to collect the harvest in England, and on the work of de-mining British beaches. The protest went on that only German POWs were required to work - the Poles should be paid for their work, like UK workers. There was a protest that only volunteers for repatriation were required to work and this was discrimination. The fact that the Poles in question were working must, according to Lapter, be having an effect on the rate of repatriation: there were many thousands of Poles who wanted to return to Poland yet there were only 2,000 a month returning.

Hankey's file minute was short and to the point:

"Let's tell him he can't have it both ways. He objects to the Polish army existing and doing military training. It is illogical for him to object to their doing civilian work." [18]

Lt.Col. Fitzgeorge-Balfour from the War Office wrote to the Foreign Office in support.

"To my mind his assertion amounts to a not very well veiled insult in that he virtually accuses you of stating a falsehood. It is absurd for



him to say that the rate of 2,000 a month is due to harvest work and the kindest thing to do is to believe that he is acting on instructions to make trouble on every possible point." [19]

It did not end there. Dr Przewanski, the Consul General, sent a letter to Hankey again complaining that the British were holding up repatriation; a group from Cumnock Camp in Scotland who had volunteered had, apparently, been left out completely. Hankey's anger and frustration are evident in the draft of a letter to the Consul:

"I must say I resent the numerous unpleasant insinuations in your letter and I must reject them all herewith. I do not see any point in raking up a lot of past episodes, but in view of what you say I feel obliged to point out that most of our present difficulties are due to the refusal, or inability, of your consulate to screen men in the camps as your own MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] said you would and as you did screen them in October, to say nothing of your failure to send screening teams when invited last May.

As for the men in Cumnock we have repeatedly told you of their discontent at the delay owing to your attitude about screening in camps. We shall, I understand, have to bring many of them to London for screening at your consulate at great expense to the taxpayer + much inconvenience to the railways. I do not know what would be said of this in Parliament if the facts became known. I should really like to settle these questions in co-operation with your Embassy + yourself, but quite frankly it is not easy and letters like yours make it no easier." [20]

Hancock of the FO pointed out to his chief, tactfully, that the letter was not very diplomatic. "They are swine," he minuted to Hankey, "but I'm not sure quarrelling with them does much good." Hankey was forced, "reluctantly", to agree to a toned down

version being sent instead.

The question of screening the Poles was definitely causing a backlog of repatriation, but the composition of the body in charge of repatriation did not help matters either. Warsaw's original intention was to send General Karol Świerczewski to become Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in the West and organise their return. This plan was unacceptable to the British: the Poles in London would certainly not accept a Communist nominee as their head and the British had no intention of forcing the issue. General Izydor Modelski was sent instead as head of the Polish Mission. Świerczewski was subsequently killed by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army [UPA] in 1946.

Modelski's arrival in London on the 15th October, 1945, was welcomed originally by the Foreign Office as a step in the right direction; the London Poles, not surprisingly, did not welcome him with open arms. Kuropieska's opinion of Modelski was that Warsaw had made a mistake in choosing him for the job that he had been sent. General Modelski was one of the handful of Polish Generals who had volunteered for repatriation and many of the exiled Poles considered this as close to desertion; in any case they would not take him seriously. Kuropieska asked the pertinent question:

"What an idea. How could they send him here. Who is going to believe him and how is he going to convince any of these fine soldiers to return?" [21]

The Foreign Office largely backed up the Colonel's views. Although Modelski was a man of "moderate political opinions" he was "not particularly popular with the other Polish generals over here, who regard him as too 'political'" [22]

Modelski's 'deputy' was of little use either. Colonel Grosz was sent to London to keep an eye on Modelski, possibly to see that his loyalty did not waver. The Foreign Office's W.D. Allen who wrote the above report on Modelski also commented there that Grosz was in fact a "Communist watchdog sent to keep an eye on General Modelski."

The Military Mission had very little effect on the whole repatriation, publicly the aspirations of it and the British Government did converge. The British wanted as many Poles as possible to return to Poland and, apparently, so did the Warsaw Poles (although to how great an extent is dealt with in Chapter 5), yet the repatriation was still going slowly. The Communists blamed Britain and the London Poles and so pushed for command of the troops. Grosz is reported to have said to Stafford Cripps:

"The Republic does not make pacts with its Generals it only gives them orders. If they do not want to listen and act in a systematic way

that is against the good of their country and try to ensure that as few soldiers as possible return home then we will have nothing to do with them, and they do England a disservice too since you are also interested in as great a number of returnees as possible." [23]

According to the Military Mission, opting out of repatriation was a better way forward than opting in. In other words the Polish forces would be sent back to Poland unless they specifically objected. For the Poles in question this was not a happy solution, but worse than that, many feared that the British might decide to solve the whole problem by shipping them back against their will.

British Government policy towards the Poles should be seen in a context that includes the policy towards the other foreign nationals that were in British hands at the end of the Second World War. As one Polish exile wrote:

"Another threat which hung over our heads was the possibility of being sent back to Poland by force. Some of us were afraid of this horse-trade arrangement. Anything could happen in a nation governed only by self-interest. We did not know Britain's limit in selling us out to Soviet Russia. Different rumours were circulating from Germany, where all Ukrainians and Russians who had surrendered to the German Armed Forces and organised some anti-Communist units were being forcibly sent to Russia by the Allies. Some of those unfortunates were so-afraid of going back to their homeland that they committed suicide. Who could guarantee that the same thing would not happen to us? More important promises and principles had been broken in the last few years." [24]

The Poles in the West were fully aware of what the British and Americans were doing in forcibly

repatriating those wanted both by Moscow and by the Tito regime in Yugoslavia. Such was the efficiency of the 'Oddział 2', the Polish Intelligence service, commonly referred to at the time by the British as the 'Deuxième Bureau' and by the Poles as the 'Dwójka', that very little happened in Italy without the Polish General Staff knowing about it. On the 28th of May, 1945, Col. Bąkiewicz head of 2 Polcorps Intelligence ciphered the General Staff that the forced repatriation of Russians was resulting in "tragic scenes". To the Poles the British appeared to be completely indifferent to the fate of these unfortunate people. [25]

Despite all appearances to the contrary, the British military establishment did not relish what was a most distasteful job. Whereas the Foreign Office decided that repatriation was the policy that had to be carried out, it was the War Office which was charged with the task. Just as the Poles had a Military Mission in Italy, so too did the Soviet Government and in June of 1945 they requested of the SACMED, Field-Marshal Alexander, that he begin to repatriate Soviet Citizens. He in turn contacted the War Office for instructions:

"Two. Soviet Mission have requested their transfer. This would require use of force including handcuffs and travel under escort in locked box cars.

Three. We believe that the handing over of these individuals would almost certainly

involve their death.

Four. There are likely to be many more such cases.

Five. Request your ruling earliest possible as how these personnel should be disposed of..." [26]

Alexander did his best to minimise the forced repatriation. It was impossible for him to stop the process; he was, after all, still a soldier and orders were orders. But it appears that he was prepared to go slowly and do as little as possible unless he was given a direct order by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff [CIGS], Field-Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, and he wrote to "Brookie" in that respect on the 20th August, 1945:

"So far I have refused to use force to repatriate Soviet Citizens, although I suppose I am not strictly entitled to adopt this attitude - nevertheless, I shall continue with this policy unless I am ordered to do otherwise." [27]

The Foreign Office was at a loss to see why the forced repatriation was not going ahead at speed. Alexander maintained that he had not been ordered to use force while the FO had already sent instructions to the War Office. The Foreign Office complained to the Secretary of the Chiefs of Staff Committee:

"No instructions however to this effect [the use of force] have been sent to Field-Marshal Alexander who has referred the matter to the Combined Chiefs of Staff, making it clear that he would be very reluctant to use force against Soviet women and Children." [28]

The Foreign Office knew very well what was happening. The War Office was fully aware what the

policy on repatriation involved and they were deliberately slowing it down. What was even worse for the FO was that the War Office had withheld the order from Alexander. It was, in the words of John Galsworthy of the FO, "a matter in which they have behaved shabbily, to say the least." [29]

If Alexander was willing to hold up the repatriation of Soviet citizens, it seems most unlikely that the Poles would have been sent back from Italy, the British would first have to disarm them and once it was known what was going on then the results would not have been pleasant.

In the first American repatriation from a detention centre set up in the former concentration camp at Dachau there was a mass suicide. As the Americans moved in to send back the Russians on January 19th, 1946, 31 men tried to kill themselves - 11 managed. Nine men hanged themselves and two died from self-inflicted knife wounds. [30] The whole episode made its way into the US press and the public was shocked. Had the British attempted to repatriate the Poles, an ally, the public outcry would have been more than the Government could deal with. Anyone who advocated sending the Poles to Poland was in a no-win situation; if the British Army was ordered to repatriate the Poles in Italy, firstly they would probably have stalled for time,

and secondly they would have had a fight on their hands - this could not be withheld from the public. If the Poles were sent to the UK and disarmed then it would have been easier to use force, but in Britain a Polish mutiny would certainly not have gone unnoticed by the public, so here too secrecy would be compromised. Since the whole question of forced repatriation was shrouded in secrecy the repatriation of the Poles by force was not really an option.

Perhaps one of the strongest reasons why the Poles would not have been repatriated by force was a strong sense of mutual respect between the Polish and British military. The Poles saw in Alexander a good soldier who could be trusted, as one Polish soldier noted, and a comment subsequently removed by the Polish Base Censor Unit, "He is a soldier not a politician who can easily sell even a loyal friend." [31] The Field-Marshal was, according to Nicholas Bethell, sympathetic to those who opposed Communism.

"Alexander had spent the year 1919, as a young officer, organising forces to resist the Bolsheviks in Poland and the Baltic States. It may well be that his sympathy for people who feared the revenge of the Soviet government stemmed from this period in his life." [32]

Some Generals could not accept that they had a role to play in trying to stop a reprehensible policy from being carried out. General Musson, who was the GOC Operation "Highjump" in which Croat POWs were

returned to the hands of Tito to be exterminated, claimed a soldier's obedience:

"I can't envisage a case where an officer would ever disobey an order. A soldier is an agent of government policy. He can't judge the rights and wrongs. He doesn't have enough information. He can represent his views, and we did this, we made it perfectly clear how ghastly the job was. But the ultimate decision must lie with the political leaders. I don't see how you can run an army or anything else if your soldiers refuse to carry out orders." [33]

Bethell is right to parallel such attitudes with the Nazis Jodl and Keitel who also claimed "soldier's obedience" at the Nuremburg Trials but were hanged regardless. Fortunately for many of these 'victims of Yalta' not all soldiers took this line.

Denis Hills, a Major in charge of Operation "Keelhaul", soon realised that he had the power of life and death over his Russian charges, and he did everything possible to let as many as possible escape the Soviet net. As he wrote:

"This incident illustrates the quandary in which the politicians who signed the Yalta repatriation terms had landed the British soldiers responsible for carrying them out, and the absurd power of a whim to decide a man's fate. [...]

To many of us who were on the spot, however, the Russian men and women, the refugees, prisoners and deserters we had to handle, were not names on a nominal roll, or War Crimes statistics. They were human beings, sometimes our batmen, cooks, orderlies and mechanics. This is what the higher authorities, who never set eyes on the men whose fates they were controlling from far away offices, ignored or did not sufficiently recognise." [34]

If the Communists could not get the British to hand

over the Poles by force, they fell upon the idea of claiming them back under the Yalta terms - according to the Soviets any person born in Soviet territory was, by definition, a Soviet citizen. The problem for many of the Poles was that Polish Lwów and Polish Wilno, and all the land in between, were now Soviet Lithuanian Wilno and Soviet Ukrainian Lwów and the land in between was Soviet Byelorussia. By British definitions people from this area were 'disputed persons' who were to be given the choice whether to return or not, for the Soviets it was more clear cut - they would take everyone they could get their hands on even to the extent of kidnapping them.

The case of Jan Rasimowicz was highlighted in an Intelligence cipher from Ancona in June, 1945. Originally he had been held as a POW in Klagenfurt with fifty other Poles when they were being transported to Italy by the British. Whilst in transit they were kidnapped by Soviet soldiers who were then about to send them on to Odessa. On the 18th of June, as the Taranto-Udine train was passing Ancona most of the Poles managed to escape: eight, however, did not. Urgent intervention was needed by the British to rescue these unfortunates. [35]

On the 11th July, 1945, Gen. Anders wrote to SACMED:

"a/ As previously reported by this HQ [...] a Soviet transport of Ex P[O]W, passing by rail through ANCONA on 19 June, containing about 50 Polish citizens who were pressed into this transport against their will and in spite of their protests.

b/ Many Polish citizens are also being held in Soviet Camps against their will. They have endeavoured to escape by every means, sometimes at the risk of their lives. A list of Poles who have already escaped from Soviet camps can be submitted on condition that it will not be passed to the Soviet Representatives, in order to avoid reprisals against their families in Poland.

In the past, incidents have occurred in which Soviet officers were apprehended and detained in the area of 2 Polish Corps and were subsequently handed over for disposal to HQ Eighth Army. These incidents were, at the time, reported, since the officers concerned were engaged in illegal activities contrary to the interests of Polish Corps." [36]

The campaign of mutual vilification between the Poles and the Soviets was taken up by the Soviet General Vassiliev, who protested to Alexander on the 3rd of August, 1945, with the accusation that Polish soldiers had insulted Soviet officers, and with the less convincing claim that Soviet citizens had been conscripted into 2 Polcorps at gun point:

"I do not see what measures the British military authorities in Italy intended to take for safeguarding Soviet citizens from coercion and ill treatment at the hands of militarists, nor if anything has already been done to liberate all the Soviet citizens compulsorily embodied in Anders' Army, and hand them over to the Soviet Military authorities." [37]

A copy of this protest was passed to Anders. Yet the matter did not end there. According to the Soviet authorities there were some 30,000 "Soviet citizens"

in the Polish Corps in Italy, and Moscow was not giving up its claim to them. On the 18th of August a meeting was held at SACMED HQ, Caserta, where the claim was again put to Alexander. The confidential minutes of the meeting run:

"Referring to Major General Basilov's request for Russian officers to visit Polish units, Field-Marshal Alexander stated that it must be clearly understood that the Poles were Allies. Their forces formed a Corps, which had fought exceedingly well in the armies under his Command. They must, therefore, be treated exactly as any other Allies were. He would not dream of ordering an Allied Corps under his command to submit to inspection by officers of another nationality. That was not the way he was in the habit of exercising his supreme command. If General Anders should invite Russian officers to visit the Polish Corps, then Field-Marshal Alexander would have no objection whatever. It would, however, be most improper for him to order General Anders to receive such officers uninvited, and he was most surprised that Major General Basilov had requested him to do such a thing." [38]

It was, as Alexander wrote to the CIGS "Brookie" in his letter of the 20th August, a "...damned cheek and I told him so in different words." [39] Yet the Soviet claims to certain Poles were not confined to Italy.

General Thorpe, GOC Allied Land Forces Norway, protested to General Ratov, Head of the Soviet Repatriation Mission there, about the abduction of a Pole called Protasewycz, on the 6th July, 1945. Ratov's reply is typical of the line Moscow was taking on 'disputed persons'.

"Nevertheless, if you assert that citizen

Protasewitch [sic] has already gone to his Homeland, this has evidently occurred through his own free wish, especially since you yourself assert that Protasewitch is a resident of Vilno. On this ground, he is a Soviet citizen and therefore I, for my part, do not see the reason for your objection which, in the given instance, is groundless." [40]

As the unsigned comment on the Foreign Office file put it: "I think we can only 'mark this up' against General Ratov". This was, however, little comfort for 'citizen' Protasewycz.

General Ratov's assertion that such people went to their 'homeland' of their own free will had a cruel and perverse truth to it. Tolstoy's 'Victims of Yalta' examines one Polish citizen who returned to Soviet territory under moral rather than physical pressure.

"Later Olenicz, who was in tears, stated that the Russian officer who interrogated him was a member of the NKVD (Russian Secret Police), who reminded him that his family were living in Soviet territory. No threats were used and nothing out of place was said, but he knew what lay behind the Russian officer's words and was afraid of him and what might happen to his family. He therefore agreed to return to Russia as a Soviet subject, and although concerned as to what the future might hold for him, was prepared to stand by his decision". [41]

Even when the Poles had reached Britain the Soviet authorities still pursued them. In February, 1947, the Soviet Embassy still claimed 609 men in the Polish Resettlement Corps [PRC] as Soviet citizens. The British Advisory Staff PRC wrote to HQ PRC to ask for the pre-war addresses of the soldiers. The Polish response was: "It is to be

pointed out that all these men resided on Polish pre-war territory." [42]

There were, of course, Poles who were prepared to be returned to what was then the Soviet Union. When the Americans invaded Algeria in 1942 they took over a camp at Djebel Oulad Nail in the Atlas Mountains that had been run by Pétain's Vichy administration. In the camp there were 300 Poles living in rather difficult conditions. When the Poles were handed over to the Polish Consul in Algeria he refused to have anything to do with the men - the soldiers had served in the Spanish Civil War as part of the 'Dąbrowski Legion' and the Polish Government deprived the men of their citizenship in 1938; this had been in the Polish constitution as the punishment for any Pole who served in a foreign armed force without the permission of the Polish Government. Since the Poles refused to do anything for this Algerian group, the Soviet Military Mission stepped in to ensure the men's release. In June, 1943, the group left for the Soviet Union. [43]

In the Polish Armed Forces in the West there were many 'Poles' who were in fact Soviet citizens. The Soviet Embassy complained bitterly in April, 1946, that the British were trying to hold up the repatriation of these 'Soviet citizens'. The Home Office Aliens Dept. declared that this was far from the truth:

"On the question of putting a brake on a too generous issue of the Soviet passports to members of the Polish Forces, our view is too many cannot be given...." [44]

The Foreign Office had no reason not to comply with requests for voluntary repatriation but they were also anxious to absolve themselves from allegations of forcing these people to leave, so they ordered that any person who wanted to go to the Soviet Union would have to sign a document to that effect. This move brought an angry response from the Soviets. Hankey minuted his concerns:

"The question we have to answer is "why do you make men who wish to go to Russia sign an application while applicants for Poland apply orally" - The real reason is of course that we must protect ourselves against someone accusing us afterwards of sending Poles to Russia against their will. We however don't want to make repatriation to Poland any harder." [45]

Many soldiers had brought all manner of trouble on themselves by signing documents given to them by foreign governments and so refused to sign the British ones, however, they still expressed the desire to go to the USSR. The Soviet Embassy complained of victimisation by the British so the Foreign Office tried to calm things down by saying that if the Soviets themselves forwarded letters from these Polish soldiers that would be acceptable.

The original plan was to send the 'Soviet' transport to Poland and for them to go on from there. This brought another protest from the Soviet

Embassy and so much fuss was made that an alternative route had to be found.

The first transport to the Soviet Union was due to depart on the 27th June, 1947. Of the 130 men who were scheduled to go, only 46 actually turned up on the day.

46	Handed Over
33	Refused at the last minute in protest over gratuities
2	Arrived too late for the transport
7	Repatriated to Poland
5	Changed their minds
37	Remained unaccounted for
===	
130	[46]

The second transport took 35 of these missing and they left on the 11th July. The third transport on the 29th July developed into a fiasco. The soldiers were put on ships at Dover to sail to France only to be turned back at Calais due to an administrative error by the Soviet Embassy. The Foreign Office had left it to the Soviet side to organise visas and passports for France but they had forgotten and the French would not let the troops land. The soldiers were brought back to Dover to sit in a camp there but, unfortunately for the plan, the French closed their military transit route and so these soldiers had to be moved via Poland after all. Hancock of the FO, on hearing the episode, minuted: "Rather funny I call this. Ha Ha". [47]

As well as the volunteers, the Soviets also had strong claims on certain other "Poles". Denis Hills

writes of the SS Halychyna (Galicia) Division that was formed by the Germans in 1943 in Lwów from Ukrainians. The Anders Poles would have nothing to with these people as they were not Poles. At the same time they refused to return to the Ukraine, their fate as 'Traitors to the Soviet Union' could easily be imagined, so Hills, as repatriation officer, classified them all as Polish citizens from Polish Galicia. In that way, as Hills himself confesses, Ukrainians and Soviet citizens, war-criminals among them, all went free. Such was the unwillingness of some British officers to forcibly repatriate people. [48]

Some Ukrainians did not take the more pragmatic approach of others, and did not hold to the idea that it was better to live as a 'Pole' than to die in a Soviet labour camp. The War Office, on the 5th March, 1945, wrote to W.D. Allen of the FO regarding a group of some 200 Ukrainians they were holding as POWs. They had been offered the chance of joining the Poles but had refused as they did not consider themselves as Polish nationals but as independent Ukrainians. The end result was that they would continue to be held as prisoners with repatriation the end result. [49]

The treatment of Balts was also a cause of many arguments between London and Moscow. Like the

eastern Poles the Balts were "disputed". While Moscow claimed all citizens of the pre-war Baltic Republics as their own, from British and US perspectives they had to be given the choice to return home or not. Many senior Allied commanders took this upon themselves. The 15th 'Latvian' SS Division "melted away" after having been warned by Army HQ in Germany. The Latvians 'acquired' civilian clothes and papers and moved into "Displaced Persons" [DP] camps in the East Friesland area. Here too, war-criminals were to escape justice. [50]

It was easier for the British Departments of State to decide what not to do with the Balts, what was more difficult to decide was how best to dispose of them. In a letter to the Control Commission for Germany, October 27th, 1945, the War Office put forward its view on the Balts: Because HMG did not recognise the Soviet annexation of the Baltic Republics it subsequently did not recognise the people there as Soviet citizens and even if it did recognise it "...the citizens of those states would not be regarded as repatriable." [51] The War Office wanted the Balts to go to Germany to be disposed of as DPs. The Control Commission responded by saying they could not take any more DPs as the camps were full to bursting. Yet the Soviet insistence that all Balts should be repatriated met with official

opposition that was unknown in the case of the Yugoslav anti-Titoists, the Ukrainians and the Vlasov Russians. In Denmark there were some 1,000 Balts and in Finland the British were concerned for 37 of them and in a magnanimous gesture the Foreign Office declared that it was ready to accept all the Balts in the UK rather than see them handed over to the Soviets. [52]

Of the other Allied nations whose war-time history bears any resemblance to the Poles', the Czechs must come high on the list. Like the Poles, the Czechs were expected to return home after the war. As the Home Secretary, Chuter Ede, explained to the Commons :

"The general arrangement as regards members of the Czech Armed Forces is that they will be repatriated to their own country. There are, however, certain cases where there are special grounds for allowing individuals to remain for the present in this country...." [53]

What this meant in reality was explained in a FO minute of February, 1946, whereby a Czech soldier could make an individual application to his HQ to stay in Britain. If this was rejected he would be expected to return to Czechoslovakia, however, no compulsion would be applied if he refused. [54]

Such was the nature of anti-Anders propaganda that emerged after the war that the allegations that the Polish Army was the enslaver of peoples was taken seriously. Max Steinberg, the Secretary of the

US Trade Union Committee for Jewish Unity, sent a telegram to the British Government on the 26th March, 1946:

"We are receiving numerous complaints to effect that Jews are being detained against their will in Polish Army commanded by General Anders. Relatives and Friends of these Jewish soldiers who are ready to assist them settle in countries of their choice are prevented from doing so. This monstrous situation adds insult and injury to Jewish people everywhere. The fascist anti-semitic character of Anders Army too well known to warrant elaboration. Forcible detention of Jews in this army is the more reprehensible because they are being made the instrument of their own destruction. This is comparable to hideous practices of Nazi beasts who forced Jews to dig own graves before dispatching them. In view of acknowledged financial support British Labour Government is giving this fascist Polish Army you bear a major responsibility for this deplorable situation. In name of thousands of American Jewish workers we ask you to immediately correct this grave injustice and to liberate these Jewish soldiers." [55]

The Foreign Office did not take such agitation seriously but was still obliged to refute the allegation by replying that the Jews in the Polish Armed Forces were not being kept as prisoners but demobilisation had not, at that time, begun. When the Polish Forces were wound down the Jews would, according to the FO, be treated the same as the Poles.

One of the major problems that the British had seen in their dealings with the Poles was the fear that the Poles might withdraw from the front line. In the overall grand strategy the effect of a Polish

pull-out would not have been dire but politically the fall-out would have been serious. The muttering of the rank-and-file were picked up by the British liaison officers who reported to the War Office about a possible mutiny. General Beaumont-Nesbitt from AFHQ Liaison Section reported to the War Office in December, 1944:

"It is not desired in this report to present an exaggerated picture, for outwardly there is little indication of any very serious loss of morale so far, but it must be stated that if the present political uncertainty continues regarding the ultimate policy which Great Britain will adopt towards Poland, the fighting efficiency of the Corps is liable to deteriorate. [...]

"Finally in this connection I must state, with all the force at my command, that I am convinced that, if the British Govt was to recognise the LUBLIN Govt, this Corps will cease fighting within 24 hours of the publication of the news, or even less." [56]

Things did not get any better from a British perspective. The Yalta agreement in February of 1945 was seen by the Poles in the West as a 'sell out'. It appears that Anders' reaction to the Crimea Conference was to threaten to pull his soldiers out of the line, as an AFHQ report to Alexander from the 15th February, 1945, explains:

"Polish Situation: No catastrophic developments reported. McCreery [GOC 8th Army] had three hour interview with Anders this morning. He wished to withdraw his troops from the line but McCreery refused to agree pointing out that he had nothing with which to relieve them and that it was vital in their own best interests apart from any other factors that Poles should continue to participate fully in war against

Germany. McCreery is satisfied that military aspect of situation is reasonably satisfactory but reports Anders himself desperately dejected and apparently without hope for future." [57]

Field-Marshal Alexander was of the opinion that given their strength of feeling it was probably best not to push the Poles too far. In his reply to the AFHQ cipher he wrote:

"I do NOT think we need have any fear that his Polish troops will NOT do their duty but in their present frame of mind I would NOT ask them to carry out any operation which would require great effort or loss of life. The only advice I could usefully give Anders is to remain calm and await events. Although this is NOT in his nature I think he will follow this advice." [58]

The Polish military cemetery near Bologna bears witness to the fact that the Poles were asked to carry on the fight in Italy. The final assault on Bologna, from the 9th to the 21st of April, 1945, cost 300 Polish lives with at least 50 being killed in a 'friendly fire' incident as a wave of Liberator bombers emptied their loads on Polish positions.

The obvious question that is now asked is: why did the Poles continue to fight? Given what the Poles knew at the time and given their feeling of general betrayal what drove the Poles forward to further sacrifice? The question is not an academic one as at the time the Polish troops were in fact asking themselves that very same question. Although most soldiers, at some time, ask themselves the perennial question: "why am I here?", there is

usually some rationale that can be used to justify military action. After Yalta the Poles found it increasingly difficult to find such motivation.

Ever aware of the need for security, the British had issued new "Guidelines for Censorship" in October of 1944:

11 4(m) Negative Criticism Derogatory opinions, criticism or statements likely to have a detrimental effect on individuals, units or the whole Polish Army or Allied troops.

(n) Reports of atrocities unless officially released. [59]

The Chief Polish Base Censor would send AFHQ a fortnightly report of excisions he had made to Forces letters. The short extracts remain some of the best indications as to what the Polish soldier was thinking at the time, and to the bitterness that most felt.

12th-27th August, 1944. Officer:

"We are fighting for "Yours and our freedom". But now I think rather only for yours."

27th July-12th August, 1944. Sergeant:

"I can say only that the Polish blood is very cheap because it's soaking the soil all over the world and probably not for our freedom."

27th July-12th August, 1944. Cadet Officer:

"If you have heard the latest radio news you will know that the future of my country is not clear. I don't know who we are fighting for and bleeding here? Nobody is going to do anything for us but in 1940 the British Prime Minister told that our land must be the same as before the war. We are trusting very much to every word he had said. And now...."

Yalta, described by the Poles as "the grave of our hopes" only highlighted how hopeless the Polish position was:

12th-27th February, 1945. Officer:

"When this morning we heard the news about the statement from the Big Three meeting we got deadly silent. Up to now I was one of the most trusting Pole in your policy which now I can call only as the policy of an ostrich hiding its head into the sand. You can think about our 'small' and 'too proud' nation as you like, that we are politically narrow-minded, stupid in a way, naughty, or obstinate, but you can't treat us worse than you treat countries which didn't put up any effort at all to help you against Germany. We sacrificed most of all countries - more than you even. We trusted you so much, and what have we got. Our biggest friend let us go down. That is darling my accusation. How I wish I was wrong but I can't see it."

Even more depressing to the Poles was not the question of the future but rather if the past suffering had achieved anything at all or had it been one, almighty, waste. Further to this there was the hope, more a case of optimism over realism, that someone would preserve 'natural justice'.

12th-27th January, 1945. Officer:

"Sometimes we ask even each other what are we fighting for? And more and more we can't find a proper answer.

...but don't think please that I'm a pessimist, not at all, in my heart of hearts I do believe that the better part of the world won't permit so that something with the ending on "ism" will rule over the world. Don't you think so?" [60]

Jan Podoski, who spent the war among the British and had had any idealism and hope for the

future removed in the cold of the British climate, put forward the idea that such hopeless optimism was almost virtually confined to the Poles in Italy and the Middle East. When General Klemens Rudnicki, the 'Liberator of Bologna', was made GOC 1st (Polish) Armoured Division in Germany the first thing Podoski noticed was Rudnicki's different attitude. Unlike the rest of his men the new CO was an optimist. Rudnicki was convinced that Poland would have to be reborn as a full and independent country. "The great sacrifices which we have made surely will not be allowed to go to waste." Podoski's cynical response was: "why not?" In the end Rudnicki was right, but as Podoski admits, he had to wait nearly half a century for it to come about. [61]

Yet the censor continued to extract protests from Polish letters, a fact that made a bad situation seem worse, as one Polish officer wrote:

12th-27th February, 1945. Officer:

"Never, never congratulate our people of Warsaw and Poland being 'liberated'. This sounds like the most cruel irony and is deeply resented by every Pole. You could speak about a lamb being liberated from a bear by a tiger. A day will come when most if not all of the British people I like and love so much, will understand full meaning of what I am saying - including the censor who is probably wondering if he has to cut out certain sentences of this letter or destroy it as a whole. Don't do it, it is not propaganda - it is truth and remember that the only countries where we Poles can express our thoughts and feelings are your great democracies

Great Britain and United States. If you order us to close our mouths - I ask you - what are we fighting for ?" [62]

The natural extension to this line of thinking was to stop fighting. As with all the armies there were sporadic desertions from the Polish ranks, but on the whole the fighting unity was maintained. This did not stop the Polish Government from feeling that it had to appeal to its troops for calm and co-operation with the Allies. Directly after Yalta the Polish Government issued the following:

"In view of the heavy blow which the Polish cause has suffered - the Polish Government realising the worries and disquiet pervading the Polish Forces - appeals to its commanders and soldiers for further carrying out of duty, retaining peace, dignity and solidarity as well as maintaining brotherhood in arms with soldiers of Forces of Great Britain, Canada, United States and France, with whom they have been tied by bloodshed in common battles.

The esteem and friendship for Poland, grown during service full of sacrifice by the Polish Armed Forces among free peoples of the West, are still in possession of the Polish Republic, which her soldiers must retain and multiply."
[63]

If Sikorski represented this esteem and friendship for Poland until his death in 1943, then Anders was the man most people associated with Poland at the end of the war. Attitudes to him largely depended on political grounds. To the British political right wing and to the military establishment he was a soldier whose record commanded respect; to the left he was an avid

anti-Communist who had been labelled a fascist by Moscow, and the label had stuck to him in British eyes. Churchill, for one, had some respect for Anders and on the 31st May, 1945, he sent a memo to both the Foreign Office and War Office requesting some decoration for him:

"This gallant man has long fought with us. I am not prepared to allow our distribution of military honours to be overshadowed by Bolshevik prejudices. I should propose that General Anders should receive a decoration for his long fighting services." [64]

For Anders this was not to be. On June 15th Parliament was dissolved for the General Election, an election that Churchill lost. The new Labour administration was less well disposed to Anders and any idea of further honours died a swift death. To be honest, Anders did not help his own cause with an endless stream of anti-Soviet Orders of the Day and speeches that were guaranteed to irritate British Government circles, and in particular the Foreign Office.

Anders' Order of the Day for July 6th, 1945, was written just after the British and US Governments had switched their recognition from the London Poles to Warsaw. Not surprisingly the text is a bitter attack on Allied policy and echoes the then current Polish feeling that their sacrifice should not be allowed to go in vain:

"Men - I am turning to you at a period of extreme difficulty and of far-reaching importance. The Governments of the Western Powers have decided to recognise the so-called Provisional Government of National Unity imposed on Poland by her occupation and thus to withdraw recognition from the legal Government of the Polish Republic in London. [...]

The World Powers by-pass our constitution and our lawful authorities, and in accepting the present circumstances, they have agreed to the fait accompli created with regard to Poland and the Poles by a foreign force.

Men, at this moment we are the only part of the Polish Nation which is able, and has the duty, loudly to voice its will, and just for this reason we must prove today by word and by deed that we are faithful to our oath of allegiance, true to our citizen's duty towards our country, and faithful to the last wish of our fallen comrades in arms, who fought and died for an independent, sovereign and truly free Poland. [...]

Our country, deprived of the rights of speech, looks towards us. It wishes to see us in the land of our ancestors - to that end we are striving and longing from the bottom of our hearts - but it does not want to see us as slaves of a foreign force: It wants to see us with our banners flying as forerunners of true freedom.

As such a return is impossible today, we must wait in closed and disciplined ranks for a favourable change of conditions. This change must come, or otherwise all the terrible and bloody sacrifices of the whole world, suffered throughout six years, will have been in vain. It is impossible to imagine that humanity has suddenly become blind and has really lost the consciousness of a mortal danger. [...]

We will fulfil our duty towards our country and its lawful authorities!

Long live the glorious republic of Poland!"

[65]

The British reaction to Anders' words was one of shock and horror. Sir Orme Sargent of the FO described it as "lamentable", but later toned down his assessment to "not at all suitable". The War

Office laid out its objections in a cipher to all

Commands:

"...it was a most unsuitable declaration to have been made by General under British High Command.

2. Order contained:

- a/ direct and almost insulting criticism HMG's policy;
- b/ mischievous propaganda in conflict with our guiding principles approved by Prime Minister namely that we should do our best to ensure that individual Poles have proper chance of opting for return to Poland;
- c/ description of either our Russian allies or Polish Government now recognised by HMG as enemies;
- d/ Improper remarks on general situation in Poland." [66]

Something as profoundly damaging to British interests as this could not be kept quiet for long.

To reassure Stalin, who was at the Potsdam Conference, or 'Terminal' as it was referred to in official circles, Churchill announced at the Second Plenary Meeting that "Disciplinary action w[oul]d be taken against this officer." [67] On the 25th of July, 1945, Anders received a letter from Alexander's Chief of Staff, W.D. Morgan, the terms of which were quite clear:

"1/ Field-Marshal Alexander reports from Potsdam that he has been approached on the highest level concerning an Order of the Day issued by you on 6 July, to which exception has been taken.

2/ In order to close the matter, Field-Marshal Alexander sought and obtained permission to deal with it himself on his return. He accordingly desires me to send you the following message:

"As a friend I most sincerely advise you not to repeat anything of this nature and as your Commander-in-Chief I must insist that, in

future, all statements by you which might be politically controversial must be submitted to me for my approval first."

- 3/ Pending Field-Marshal Alexander's return, I ask you to ensure that nothing which might be politically controversial is issued without prior submission to, and approval by, this Headquarters.

W.D. MORGAN
Lieutenant-General
Chief of Staff"

[68]

The British press, always keen for a scandal, picked up on the Anders affair, and "The Observer" ran a story about Anders' visit to AFHQ in Caserta, on the 13th of July, where Alexander was reported to have rebuked Anders for his Order. For the sake of unity Alexander informed the War Office that:

"No (rpt no) rebuke was issued by Field Marshal Alexander at this or any other time and interview was most cordial." [69]

Anders was not alone in feeling that the end of the war was, for the Poles, not really the end of the struggle. As the Polish Base Censor's reports indicate, the Polish Forces could foresee that the West's honeymoon period with the 'Russian Ally' would not last. This did not, however, mitigate the feeling of emptiness and waste:

27th May-12th June, 1945. Cadet Officer:

"When the loudspeakers announced the end of the war - I was not happy. I abstained with difficulty from the weeping. The weeping of an immeasurable pain. I am an old soldier. I took part in a number of battles. And I was happy that I was left alive. I did it because I was sure that it happened for my destination for a

beautiful future and now? The end of the war indicates for me:- the certainty that I'll never more see my beautiful fatherland - the certainty that I'll never see my family and friends - the certainty that the ideas for which I fought about 6 years never have existed - the beginning of leading a homeless life. Bitter words. Bitter minds. But - can they be other?"

Or as another officer put it:

"In the time when the whole world rejoices at the end of the war, we Poles are sad. We pray for the second war, which will bring the real liberty for us and our country." [sic]

This was a particularly worrying aspect of the Polish problem. The British Government had on its hands several tens of thousands of very bitter troops waiting for an excuse to fight the Communists. To quote one sergeant:

"Oh! My Dear, the war is finished, but not for us! We are further soldiers and we are expecting a moment when we will go back to Poland with weapons in our hands." [70] [sic]

Although the British did not expect a spontaneous rising by the Polish Forces, there was a worry about the more radical officers inciting revolt.

Brigadier Frith of HQ 26 British Liaison Unit forwarded new guidelines to HQ 2 Polcorps entitled "Press Interviews - Instructions to Commanders" in which it was forbidden to openly discuss certain topics:

- "3c - Political matters of any kind which may involve higher policy.
- d - Matters of policy outside the jurisdiction of the Command.
- [...]

4 - Statements by Senior Officers

A summary of the text of all statements (verbal, written or broadcast) which are to be attributed to Senior Officers by name, by appointment or by implication, will be submitted for prior approval." [71]

Although it was the Brigadier's intention to control Anders' brand of anti-Communist propaganda the effect was largely unsuccessful.

The Polish Chiefs of Staff, Anders, Kopański, Świrski and Iżycki, sent a letter to the British Government on the 25th May, 1946, saying that it was in Britain's own interest to keep the Polish Armed Forces to safeguard the future. The Poles protested at the plans to demobilise their forces. According to Anders' ADC this letter was by way of a final protest, 'for the record' as it were. After this Capt. Lubomirski told Hankey of the FO that the Poles would quietly co-operate with British plans. [72]

Anders was still determined to get his message across to anyone who would listen. His Order of the Day for the 29th May, 1946, was another text guaranteed to incite the wrath of the British political establishment.

"We are marching from Italy through British lands, and tomorrow, by a road which is still unknown, to the true Poland for which we have fought and which no Polish heart can picture without Lwow and Wilno. We shall not depart from this road which is our historical road. Our service is not ending. Our march is towards Poland, free, whole and independent."

To Polish ears this was just what they wanted to hear, defiant words that harked back to another time when Poles fought in Italy under General Dąbrowski 'for Poland' and Napoleon. From the British perspective just the opposite was true. Hankey of the FO minuted that it was "Pretty bad + one sided statement. I'd hoped for better than this" and in a Cabinet minute...

"It was pointed out that these statements were likely to give offence to the Governments of Poland and the Soviet Union and might increase the difficulties of arranging for the disposal of these Polish forces." [73]

For the Foreign Office the course was clear. Anders had to go. The plan formulated was to replace him by General Tadeusz Kutrzeba (the spelling of whose name provided some difficulty for the clerks at the FO) as Kutrzeba was considered to be a non-political soldier who was then in a state of semi-retirement writing a military history. During the September Campaign in 1939 he had commanded the Poznań Army and taken part in the battle on the Bzura. He was also the officer who had signed General Blaskowitz's act of capitulation for Warsaw. After having spent the war as a POW in Germany he was released in May, 1945, and had made his way to London. Although he was acceptable to London and to the Warsaw Poles, to the troops on the ground he was a poor substitute for Anders.

General Boruta-Spiechowicz, one of the handful of Generals who returned to Poland after the war, agreed with the British view, in highly secret talks on a return visit to London, that Kutrzeba was the best candidate to replace Anders. As the minutes of the meeting show:

"Boruta saw Kuszczeba [sic] in London and he (Boruta) is convinced that Kuszczeba would be the only officer acceptable to both sides who could take command for repatriation purposes of the forces outside Poland in case at any time it is considered that command must be changed."
[74]

In the list of possible candidates to fill Anders' shoes Boruta-Spiechowicz's name had also been mentioned in high places. Marshal Rola-Zymierski, Warsaw's Minister of Defence, had put the suggestion forward to the British in August of 1945. The War Office was painfully aware of what the effects of imposing a Warsaw appointee on the Polish Armed Forces would be. As with Colonel Sidor's Mission, the London Poles, who had little enough respect for Boruta-Spiechowicz for going back to Poland, would have had nothing to do with him as Commander. An AFHQ cipher to Field-Marshal Alexander on the 31st of August, shows that the military foresaw the worst:

"We must handle this affair very firmly otherwise we shall have a disaster. To replace ANDERS by any nominee of the Warsaw Government will lead to mutiny. Anders is NOT only a well loved Commander but the trusted guide and mentor of his men whom he has brought out of

Russian captivity and led through years of fighting ending in great victory. My advice is NOT to allow any intervention in Italy by representatives of the Warsaw Government. I have already segregated 12,000 Poles who wish to go back to Poland and as soon as I get authority I will arrange their return." [75]

Six months later Alexander's successor as SACMED, General Morgan, was coming to the same conclusions. As this Top Secret report to the Cabinet Offices concludes - Anders should stay:

- "The turn out of the Poles and discipline was of a very high standard. Poles were helping local Carabinieri to ensure a higher standard of law and order than in most of Italy.
- iv/ There is a considerable volume of evidence from refugees - some Jewish - from Poland which gives fairly conclusive information that conditions in Poland for all except supporters of the existing Communist Government are deplorable and are deteriorating further.
[...]
- vi/ As a result of my visit...I view with the gravest concern the certainty of serious trouble that will arise throughout the Corps if General Anders is arbitrarily removed from command or not permitted to rejoin the Corps after his visit to London." [76]

The last passage was highlighted in the Foreign Office and C.F.A. Warner noted: "Altho' Gen. Morgan may exaggerate Gen. Anders' qualities, we cannot altogether discount the last sentence of his tel.m".

The prospect of mutiny was one that did not leave British policy makers. Even at Potsdam Churchill had to tell Stalin that "...we had to be careful about the Polish Army, for if the situation was mishandled there might be a mutiny." [77]
Certainly while the Poles were carrying out

occupation duties there was always the possibility of armed protest, and even when the Poles were in Britain for demobilisation the risk did not subside. General Lyne, the War Office Director of Staff Duties, wrote to Hill of the Home Office Aliens Dept.:

"We have not in England at present nearly sufficient troops of the right type, and standing by, ready to deal with such a situation, if it was well organised." [78]

The agreed line was that 'prevention was better than cure' and conditions would have to be made that the Poles did not feel it necessary to rebel. In any case, in the event of "large scale disturbances" the War Office might have to bring back troops to the UK from 'Imperial policing' duties. It would not be possible to keep large numbers of troops in the UK mobilised for an eventuality that, hopefully, would never happen.

But still the Warsaw regime kept insisting that the British hand over control of the Polish Armed Forces in the West and still the British had to keep refusing. The official policy of the British Government was ciphered by the Foreign Office to Cavendish-Bentinck, UK ambassador to Warsaw, on the 6th March, 1946.

"They [the Polish Provisional Government] proposed that the Polish Armed Forces should be placed under the command of officers appointed from Warsaw and that they should then be returned to Poland in their existing units.

3. It was impossible for His Majesty's Government both on practical and on moral grounds, to

agree to the proposed transfer of command to officers appointed from Warsaw. The state of mind of the majority of the men described above made it certain that there would have been a breakdown of discipline and grave disorders if an attempt had been made to impose commanders appointed by Warsaw. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the majority of the officers and men would simply have refused to obey such officers." [79]

Yet if the Foreign Office expected Anders to maintain some discretion then they were to be disappointed. On the 15th of June, 1946, he issued what was to be known as his 'Oath'. Another call to his men to remain faithful to the cause and a, not very thinly disguised, attack on the post-war settlement was sure to vex the British, and indeed it did.

"Our tradition which is a thousand years old binds us with the Western civilisation and we do not intend to be forced in to the Eastern system which is foreign to us and hostile towards us. We shall therefore, remain loyal to our Allies. We shall stick to them even if they do not at the moment see eye to eye with us, as we believe that the true liberty of nations and men will be achieved through the triumph of truth over falsehood and of Christian Culture over barbarism." [80]

The reaction of the Warsaw regime was swift and angry. The BBC monitors picked up the Polish Press Agency's response:

"Would the British Government allow any other military commander to announce his intention to fight with arms Allied Governments, members of the United Nations?

We are convinced that it would not do so. Why does the British Government allow Anders to make such declarations? Do they consider that this is a better way to encourage Polish soldiers to return home?" [81]

Other sections of Anders' text were even more belligerent:

"According to the decision of our Allies with whom we fought side by side all the time for the common cause of freedom, the Independent Polish forces are to be demobilised.... Today the world understands that Poland is ruled by servile agents of Moscow.... We are deeply convinced that we were always loyal to our Allies at times most perilous for them. In spite of this, however, there were no Polish soldiers parading on V-Day. The Polish airmen, who were the only ones to be invited, refused to take part in the celebration as the Polish sailors and soldiers from Monte Cassino were absent.... As soldiers of the sovereign Polish Republic, who remain faithful to their oath, we vow before God, our colours and the graves of our comrades, that in unity with the aims of the whole nation, both in Poland and abroad, we shall continue our struggle for the liberty of Poland, regardless of the conditions in which we shall have to live and work" [82]

W.D. Allen of the FO minuted the file about the 'Oath':

"This summary suffices to show that the statement is as bad as it could be... if anything were needed to damn the Resettlement Corps in their [Warsaw's] eyes this is it. We could tell the press that the statement was not authorised by the British Command. But I think we should have to ask Caserta before doing so and in any case such an announcement would provoke the further question (a) how is it that we have so little control over the Poles under our command and (b) what do we propose to do about this obvious indiscipline. The logical course would be to remove Gen. Anders from his command. But by doing so we should probably weaken rather than strengthen our control and make Gen. Morgan's task all the more difficult." [83]

The Head of the Northern Department minuted in the margin: "I agree... We haven't got to stand Anders much longer anyway."

The War Office contacted General Morgan to find out what was going on in Italy. In a cipher from AFHQ to the War Office on the 25th of June, the SACMED explained that he was not consulted by Anders about the text. He had met Anders who had told him that he had not asked Morgan since Morgan would, undoubtedly, have refused permission and Anders did not want to put the onus on him. Morgan believed that this was an honest explanation. What was of greater concern was the idea that Anders was not the master of his house. Morgan's telegram continued:

"The statement was presented to him [Anders] by the officers and men of the corps with a demand for ratification. He toned it down considerably but he is convinced that unless some statement had been made he was in danger of losing control of his corps." [84]

There had been murmurings of unrest from Anders' subordinates for some months and this only served to complicate the deliberations over Anders' future. The Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin wrote to J.J. Lawson, Minister of War, back in January of 1946:

"HM Embassy in Rome... have recently reported that General Anders himself is less extreme in his views than some of his senior staff officers, and have suggested that the latter might be capable of causing any amount of mischief in the General's absence. I think therefore that serious consideration should be given to recalling some of the most undesirable senior Polish officers in Italy at the same time as General Anders himself." [85]

The predicament of the British appeared to be such that they could not live with Anders and they could not live without him.

Anders himself appears to have undergone periods of self-doubt. Like his troops Anders could not help thinking that all that had gone before had been a supreme waste of effort, and, as the officer in command, Anders had asked thousands of Poles to make sacrifices for little reward.

The Resident Minister to AFHQ wrote of Anders:

"General Anders is generally considered in Polish circles to be pro-British, even excessively so. [...] He has around him however several officers of Piłsudski's faction who have not failed to seize on any British "exposition" towards Polish Forces to urge the General to adopt a reactionary nationalistic policy. Only the General's loyalty to us and his personal control of his troops have prevented the spread of such anti-British tendencies in the Corps."
[86]

Yet if Anders was 'pro-British' then the conflict of interests was gradually wearing him down. One of the Polish liaison officers to AFHQ, Major Gawronski, wrote a report for the British under the title "Atmosphere in Polcorps" on the 5th of June, 1946:

"General Anders is in a most pathetic mood. He feels he has let down his men who have trusted him so blindly. He speaks with the highest admiration and gratitude of the sympathy and kindness he has met with everywhere in London and in AFHQ. He says he has met with nothing but friends who quite obviously are doing their best to give him decent treatment, but at the same time they fail to see that he has been let down on what is essential, and that owing to that he has - what is far worse - let down his own men. That is what hurts him most." [87]

The constant umbrage that was taken by the British Government over the attitude of the Poles in London and on

military service overseas rather begs the question - what did they expect? The British had achieved their war aims; the Poles in the West had fulfilled none of theirs. By the end of the war Poland had not been liberated from foreign occupation, Poland had been robbed of her eastern territory and her allies in London and Washington had stood by and let it happen, they had signed the Yalta accord that made it 'legal' but what was worse was that the Poles were being humiliated through being forced to accept it without protest or criticism. To many in Britain Anders was a 'nationalist', a 'reactionary' and even a 'fascist'. The fact, however, was that Britain at Yalta had not signed away British territory but rather one more of those small European states about which the British confessed they knew so little.

Perhaps what is more surprising about the Polish reaction to events was just how restrained they were. As Field-Marshal Alexander was leaving Italy for the last time Anders gave him a memorandum containing the main objections which grieved the Poles. In Anders' own words:

"In this memorandum I called attention to the strong feeling of the average Polish soldier that, although he knew that he had done his duty well and loyally, he and his country had been wronged, and that conditions did not permit of his return to the free and independent Poland for which he had so steadfastly fought. [...]"

If the state of uncertainty continued, the Polish troops, whose patience was, after all, not limitless, might well get out of hand." [88]

Apparently Alexander's opinion on Anders' memorandum was that it was "True, sound and moderate" yet Anders never heard anything else about it. His comments "...disappeared like a stone thrown into water."

Anders was certainly not the only Polish commander whose outspoken criticism got him into trouble. The commander of the 14th Armoured Brigade, Colonel Bobiński, stationed in Egypt also wrote a hostile Order of the Day for the 7th of May, 1945:

"Today all hostilities against the Germans in Europe have ceased. Our eternal Teutonic enemy has been defeated. [...]

This is not (repeat not) the end of our efforts. Our country is occupied by the second enemy Soviet Russia to (? war) with whom we must further prepare ourselves. Do your best in order to become good Armoured soldiers in the least possible time. Poland suffers in captivity and awaits her liberation which can only be brought home by the Polish Soldiers."
[89]

General Paget, the C-in-C Middle East Forces, wrote to Alexander as to whether Bobiński should be relieved of his command, but the SACMED replied on the 19th of May that a rebuke would be enough but, just to pre-empt a total collapse of morale, the Brigade was moved from Quassasin near the Suez Canal to El Amerya on the outskirts of Alexandria "for a change of climate and to improve the facilities for training." [90] - Alexandria also contained some of the more obvious facilities for bored troops to amuse themselves.

The Poles were becoming a major problem for the British Authorities. The Cabinet, at its meeting on the

22nd of January, 1946, agreed that:

"...the maintenance of these substantial Polish Forces under arms was a source of increasing political embarrassment to us in our relations with the Soviet Union and with Poland."

Above all the Government had to get from Warsaw:

"...a precise statement of the conditions that would be offered to them on return; and it contemplated that this information should be included in a statement of our policy in respect of the future of the Polish Armed Forces, which would be drawn up for communication to all Polish troops under British command. This statement must also include information, which at this stage should be definitely discouraging, about the prospects for those not desiring to return to Poland."

The Government also had to explain "fully and frankly" to Anders and the Polish General Staff that they should not use their "great influence with their troops to prevent men returning to Poland". It was considered that it would probably be necessary to prevent them returning to Italy. Although the Home Secretary had no legal powers to prevent Anders leaving the UK:

"...it was suggested that, without the exercise of any civil powers, military measures could be taken to secure that, as a soldier under British Command, he could not return to Italy."

The key line which the British were to take was that:

"...it should be recognised now that we should be under a moral obligation to deal generously with them, even though it were not thought possible to grant them British nationality to the extent implied in the statement by the late Prime Minister on the 27th February, 1945." [91]

The statement mentioned here was the so-called 'pledge' by Churchill. It appeared that the new Labour administration was to follow the gist of what Churchill had announced

although not the letter and so Operation "Keynote" was born. The idea was to distribute a copy of an appeal by Bevin to all the Polish Forces in the West in the hope that it would convince as many as possible to return to Poland. The Polish Armed Forces would be dissolved and the Poles had either to return to Poland or await some, as yet, unclear future at the hands of the British Government.

Although the Foreign Office had largely given up the idea of removing Anders from his command, it was assumed that his attitude to the note would be unhelpful and so further steps would have to be taken in the event that this proved to be so. The Foreign Office minuted on the 4th March, 1946:

"On the other hand it is probably unlikely that we shall find General Anders and the Commanders very co-operative. We shall be lucky if they adopt merely a neutral attitude and there is certainly a substantial risk that their attitude may be so unco-operative that we shall have to retain them in this country." [92]

So Anders was summoned to London on the 14th of March and the next day he and the senior Polish commanders met with Attlee and Bevin where the future was outlined in no uncertain terms. As Anders later freely admitted, he had little option but to go along with the plan, dependent as he was on the largesse and goodwill of London. He convinced the British that he would not use his influence to prevent the distribution of the appeal nor to hinder the

way for any Pole who wanted to be repatriated. Thus Anders was allowed to return to his troops.

The whole operation, carried out by the War Office in strict secrecy, involved the transport of copies of Bevin's note to all commands where Poles were stationed. The details for distribution were:

90,000 fly	Naples	Friday	8 March	
10,000 fly	Cairo	Friday	8 March	
30,000 fly	Naples	Saturday	9 March	
5,000 fly	Paris	Sunday	10 March	
25,000 fly	Buckeburg	Sunday	10 March	
50,000 Train	Edinburgh	Sunday	10 March	[93]

There were some 210,000 leaflets to be distributed to the Poles. What many Poles found the most disturbing was the British refusal to allow informed debate on the subject of repatriation. The War Office sent a Top Secret cipher to GHQ Central Mediterranean Forces on the 6th of March:

"In view forthcoming announcement giving HMG's policy on return of Poles it is essential you ensure that no articles advising refusal to return to Poland or questioning bona fides of Warsaw Government terms should be allowed to appear in papers run by Polish Forces."

GHQ CMF in its return cipher to the War Office stated that censorship of Army newspapers had been stopped from September 1st, 1945, so articles could not, in fact, be refused.

The War Office, full of helpful advice, returned the cipher to Italy saying:

"These papers are regarded as official mouthpiece of 2 Polish Forces. At this stage some control is therefore essential. In UK control is exercised by making paper allotment only on condition that controversial political questions are avoided. Suggest you adopt same procedure." [94]

This did not affect any pro-Warsaw, pro-repatriation articles. Anything that got rid of the Poles was allowed; anything that encouraged Poles not to return was frowned upon.

Because "Keynote" was such an important element of British Policy, and because the Government had told Warsaw that it was doing its utmost to get the Polish Forces to return to Poland, then the distribution had to go smoothly. No pretext was to be given for the Communists to turn around and say that the British were not really serious in their aim. Not only had Bevin's note to be given out to each and every Pole, but it had to be seen to be given out by Warsaw.

Since neither the War Office nor the Foreign Office had confidence in the good will of the Polish Forces in this matter so it would have to be supervised very carefully by the British. On the 3rd March the War Office ciphered General Paget, C-in-C MEF:

"On date of issue a British officer will be present in all major Polish units in all theatres other than ITALY. In ITALY British supervision will be to greatest possible extent and must in any case be sufficient to ensure British evidence that statements were issued down to Polish rank and file." [95]

Although the Poles in question had nothing to do with the formulation of the note they were still expected to carry out the distribution, whether they liked it or not. As the cable from 2 Polcorps Quartermaster shows, the Poles were expected to be an instrument of their own demobilisation:

"For the days 20 and 21/III arrange 5 translators to be at the disposal of 3 District. They will escort the British officers controlling the distribution of the declaration of the English and Warsaw Governments. They are to be equipped with field beds." [96]

The British also made provision for the Polish Air Force and Navy to receive Bevin's appeal, but, as with the Army, mutiny could not be ruled out by the Poles. Once the Poles knew that they were to be disbanded as a military body there was a threat that they might scuttle their ships or take to the sea like a latter-day "Potemkin". The Admiralty contacted all commanders of naval bases used by the Poles on the 13th March, 1946:

- "2. Polish Ships are not repeat not to leave present British ports without express Admiralty authority. Polish ships in foreign ports are to be recalled.
- 2.[sic] No further ammunition is to be embarked and only stores necessary for current maintenance should be supplied." [97]

This was confirmed on the 22nd March, 1946 when a "Stand-Still Order" was issued to ensure the rapid distribution of pamphlets and to "keep ships manned by Polish personnel in close supervision by appropriate authorities" until evidence became available as to what the reactions to the pamphlet were likely to be.

On March 20th, 1946, Operation "Keynote" swung into action and the text was delivered to the Polish Armed Forces. [The text of Bevin's address and that of the Warsaw Provisional Government is at Appendix B, including sections - highlighted - that were deleted from the text just prior to distribution] The reactions from the Poles

were varied. Although there were sporadic refusals to accept the Bevin note, on the whole the British were very pleased with the distribution. An AFHQ Interim Report to General Morgan, who was visiting the War Office at the time, was quite positive in its appraisal:

"Two. The distribution of the pamphlets to the entire rank and file of the Corps was completed without incident by evening 21 March. Most of it was completed by evening 20 March. The smooth accomplishment of this task reflect great credit on 2 Polcorps and upon British officers participating. It is evident that General Anders' orders were explicit and the Corps abided by the spirit as well as by letter of the orders. Individual Unit Commanders distributed statement to individual soldiers without comment or propaganda.

Three. 2 Polcorps press has co-operated fully printing statement without editorial comment." [98]

But the report did say that further reaction might come about and a close watch would have to be kept. Colonel Tappin, Head of the AFHQ Liaison Section, noted that distribution was "...carried out without incident and in an atmosphere of calm efficiency..." and that was "...despite the strong dislike of the majority for political doctrines of the Polish Government." [99]

It was not only the British who were keen to find out just what the reaction among Polish troops was. Polish Forces HQ in Ancona sent a cipher to the Head of 2 Polcorps Intelligence, Colonel Bąkiewicz on the 21st of March to find out if attitudes had changed in the ranks:

"Please report by telegram, before 23/III, what impression has been made on the troops by the address of Minister Bevin and also how their moods are being affected in relation to this." [100]

If the initial reaction was one of calm, that is not to say that there were no problems. The Interim Report for General Morgan, cited above, also made several observations that the Poles were quick to notice.

"Four. Following general reaction apparent so far.

A- Personnel are perplexed that neither General Anders nor their Commanding Officers have issued clarifying statement. It seems then that this may affect the final decision of a large number.

B- Some confusion caused by fact that no date for decision indicated.

C- Personnel are suspicious because,

1- Warsaw terms are neither signed nor dated.

2- Bevin's statement is not dated and no title appears below his signature.

3- Pamphlet is in bad Polish. [...]" [101]

Another of the minor over-sights with the text was its layout. It was presented as a four sided pamphlet but only three and a half of the pages had printing on them, half of page four was left blank - an ideal space for angry Poles to write their ideas on what Bevin could do with his offer. The files of the PRO contain some of these returned pamphlets with opinions written on them, for example:

Major Bolesław Glaser: "After you Sir. It is not truth. Do you know, maybe, what happened with my family."

2nd Lt. Dr. Leon Waldman: "I have been one time in Russia - that is sufficient."

Rifleman Franciszek Luszczyk: "...I therefore beg you for protection abroad. I would rather die under a hedge in a democratic country than experience communistic luxury." [102]

As these comments began to arrive at the Foreign Office suspicions began to arise that there might be some form of Polish conspiracy to register this mass protest. One of

the key pieces of evidence was that the same phrases began to crop up - "Asiatic" being the most common. Cadet Officer Edward Laniewski, for example, wrote:

"I decided after reading above, to fight for our freedom and yours against Asiatic dominators of Europe. I can't come back to Poland in present conditions." [103][sic]

Suspensions were confirmed at the FO when they received the reply of 2nd Lt Dr Roman Drozd which was a not even thinly veiled copy of Laniewski's. Even a cursory study of Polish letters to the Foreign Office demonstrates that there must have been some collusion and the similarity of these letters could not have been by chance.

The Polish Press reaction was, on the whole, not as negative as the British had feared. In a report to its Embassy in Warsaw the Foreign Office concluded that although the "Polish Daily" has a few references to the Warsaw regime like "so-called Government" and "imposed on Poland by a foreign will" the reaction had been acceptable. As Hankey minuted in the margin of the report: "This is probably the best that could be expected - we shall continue to watch it." [104] The report in the "Polish Daily" was considered to be fair as it did not dissuade Poles from going back.

The war-diaries of Polish units show that, officially, the reaction of the Poles was deemed as dignified and efficient - echoing the War Office view. The 14th Armoured Brigade records that:

"The soldiers of the Brigade, after making themselves familiar with the text of the pamphlet accepted it with calm and dignity" [105]

The HQ 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division was more precise:

"In general the address was accepted without incident. The Brit. officers who were controlling whether the address would reach all the soldiers received a clear and unequivocal answer in that:
a/ The soldiers have no confidence or certainty in the guarantees of return or of personal security.
b/ The announced reprisals against soldiers formerly serving in the German Army may be applied quite arbitrarily.
c/ Every soldier is liable to action against him under the Polish Penal Code." [106]

Whereas the British tried their best to be reassuring, positive and deliberately vague, the text that accompanied Bevin's from the Warsaw Provisional Government was decidedly unhelpful to the British cause. If the British wanted the Poles to go back to Poland, and this was also the stated aim of the Warsaw Poles, then to issue a statement which dwelt on the fact that some repatriates would, almost certainly, end up in prison was not best advised.

Anders in the Polish version of his memoirs, a version not quite so tactfully edited as "An Army in Exile" for an English reading audience, puts down exactly what was wrong with the message in "Keynote".

"The understanding between the British Government and the Provisional Government of National Unity in Warsaw, underlining the treatment for soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces returning to their country, in the first section dealt with a precise catalogue of repression and punishment which might be visited upon them. The second section gave some nebulous promise to treat them on an equal footing to all troops in the reborn Polish Army based on public declarations by Bierut and Żymierski, on the addresses of the

Provisional Government and on Orders of the Day to celebrate various festivals. This understanding did not have the character of a mutually binding agreement between two governments and it was not signed by anyone. On the document that was given to me there was neither a date nor a place of signing." [107]

One of the other major criticisms made by the AFHQ Interim Report of the presentation of Bevin's declaration was: "Pamphlet is in bad Polish". Such was the secrecy involved in the preparation of the text, and in particular in its translation, and such was the mistrust in which the Poles were held that the Polish version, translated by an Englishman, came out in a most un-Polish Polish. This, of course, had a most negative effect of the troops:

"Sir,

As a member of the Polish forces who has received a copy of the foreign secretary's appeal, may I suggest that more care might have been exercised in translating it into Polish?

It contains at least 25 errors of grammar and syntax which do anything but sweeten a bitter pill. One would have expected the authority in charge to realise that the poor quality of the language in which a historical document is couched does not contribute to its intended effect.

L.R. Lewitter, Christ's College, Cambridge." [108]

Lewitter's letter to "The Times", March 25th, 1946, highlights the indignation many Poles felt at this lapse in organisation. The poor language, per se, was not the problem. Jerzy Potocki writes that the bad Polish made the Poles feel that if His Majesty's Government had neglected such an easily remedied fault as the translation of a note then how could they have confidence in the British

to stand by them over the more difficult question of repatriation. [109]

Even Kuropieska, Warsaw's military attaché, agreed that the language of Bevin's text was "monstrous" [potworny]. But worse than that it did not create a favourable impression on Poles all round. For reasons already mentioned it hurt the exiles but it also offended the Poles in Warsaw who were galled at Bevin's presumptuous nerve at guaranteeing things outside his bailiwick. [110] Warsaw Radio, on the 21st March, broadcast the view of the Communists:

"Minister Bevin's attitude, as defined by these words, is misrepresenting the truth. Neither the Yalta nor the Potsdam decisions entitle Britain or any other power to interfere in internal Polish matters....

We are sorry, but we will pay no attention to the magnanimous and enigmatic gestures of the British Foreign Minister." [FO Highlights - 111]

The Polish Armed Forces refused to take "Keynote" seriously. Certainly some Poles were tempted to go back at that point; most were not.

Professor Kot, the old 'ruffian' complained in Rome that the Polish troops were not getting the message. Perhaps Bevin had been overly vague with regards to the future. On the 14th May, 1946 he contacted the Foreign Office via Rome:

"From a number of conversations with officers and men of second Polish corps I have gained the impression that Mr Bevin's declaration was received by them as a first step towards a solution and that they still expect to be asked a direct question and to fill up

and sign some kind of individual question form to be distributed by the British Military authorities." [112]

Bevin's appeal to the Polish troops' sense of honour, historical tradition and patriotic duty were clearly not enough to get the Poles to leave. There was widespread resentment at Bevin's effrontery at telling the troops what was in Poland's best interest and it was apparent that there would be no mass exodus to Poland. If nothing else worked then bribery was one idea that was still open.

On the 19th February Cavendish-Bentinck in Warsaw had put one idea to the Foreign Office which he considered might be worth investigating:

"... a large gratuity might prove a potent incentive to many to return, and it may be cheaper in the long run to pay these gratuities than to have to maintain the Poles or provide for their future." [113]

This was not a new concept as LaGuardia, when he became the Head of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration [UNRRA], tried to reduce the chronic problem of European refugees and Displaced Persons in Germany by offering sixty days' ration for any Polish DP who returned to Poland. While most did not avail themselves of the offer; many did. [114] Although it was an idea in embryo, the British did not attempt to pay the Poles to return to Poland. They preferred to concentrate on encouragement and appeal while at the same time being deliberately vague about the options.

At the sixth meeting of the Polish Armed Forces Committee on January 4th, 1946, where discussions were

held as to what to put into Bevin's address,
Cavendish-Bentinck....:

"...said that members of the Polish Armed Forces and their families in Poland entertained unduly optimistic ideas about what His Majesty's Government was prepared to do for them if they did not go back. It was necessary to correct this. The statement should therefore be in a frank and discouraging tone. The men would in fact be presented with a choice of evils."

The minutes of the meeting go on to elaborate just how this "choice of evils" was to be put into practice for the Poles.

- "i/It should make clear the restricted scope of the Home Secretary's offer to accept in the United Kingdom the relations of aliens established here.
- ii/It should present His Majesty's Government's interpretation of Mr. Winston Churchill's "Pledge" to the Poles.
- iii/It should elaborate His Majesty's Government's policy towards Poles who elected to remain behind indicating the possibility that they might be able to expect no better treatment than that accorded to stateless persons." [115]

The original draft of the minutes included the phrase that the Poles would be "...treated as displaced persons" but this was later amended.

The Government put off for as long as possible any discussion on what it was going to do for the Poles so as not to give the wrong impression. As Bevin, quoted in "The Times" of the 21st March, 1946, explained to the House of Commons:

"I would like all hon. members not to encourage members of the Polish forces to decline to go back. (Cheers) I feel that these magnificent troops will be such an asset to Poland in her political and industrial reconstruction that if too much emphasis is placed on what we will do a wrong impression may

be caused. We are very anxious, extremely anxious, that the Polish will return to their own country." [116]

The British were hampered in their planning by a great deal of uncertainty of just how many Poles they would have to be dealing with. Although they had hoped that a great proportion would return to Poland they had always suspected that the numbers who did not go would be great.

On the 4th April the Ministerial Committee on Polish Questions met to:

"...direct and stimulate the search for an early solution of the problems connected with the dispersal of the Polish Armed Forces under British Command, their dependents and certain Polish civilians now in this country." [117]

On the 20th February prior to that meeting the Committee had tried to estimate the scope of their problem:

"We are faced with the problem not only of finding permanent employment and places of settlement for between one and two hundred thousand members of the Polish Armed Forces under British command as well as at least fifty thousand civilians many of whom are dependents of service personnel. Recent moves on the part of the Polish Provisional Government are likely to have reduced our chances of persuading any substantial number of these Poles to return to Poland in the near future." [118]

Sir Orme Sargent's words were echoed in a reply to the Ministry of Labour which had enquired of the FO as to how many Poles to budget for. There was a rumour that as many as 75% of the Poles might go back. The Foreign Office was quick to dash such hopes. Again they wrote that the actual numbers would depend on what was happening in Poland and how the Warsaw regime was behaving. The first and most obvious symbol of Warsaw's good intent would be the 'free

and unfettered' elections that had been promised. The FO concluded:

"Our present indications are that elections are unlikely to be free. If this is the case we cannot expect that the rate of repatriation to Poland will increase and it may indeed dry up altogether.

In any case, I think that we should be careful to avoid undue optimism... I fear that we ought to budget for 150,000 Poles for the next two years." [119]

Once the British Government had decided to demobilise the Polish Armed Forces events began to move quickly. Plans were drawn up to move all the Polish troops to Britain - another move fraught with tension as the reaction of the Polish troops could not be counted on. On the 25th of May, 1946, the Head of 2nd Corps Intelligence contacted the heads of his Intelligence stations 'C', 'J', 'R', 'S' and 'Z' located over Italy to: "Report by telegram the mood and change of mood with the new situation of the Corps' transfer to England." [120]

The plans of shipment from Italy were set by the War Office on the 5th June. Advance parties from all Commands would be the first to arrive in Britain then by the following order:

14th Armoured Brigade	-	4,000	troops
2nd Armoured Division	-	15,000	troops
Corps and Base Troops	-	42,000	troops +
		3,000	Women's Auxiliaries
3 Carpathian Rifle Div.-		19,000	troops
5 Kresowa Infantry Div.-		20,000	troops
		=====	
		103,000	

The exact number and geographical location of the 2nd Corps in Britain is attached as appendix C but the

total number of troops, including those already in Britain forming the 1st Polish Corps, came to 137,000 spread over the five Home Commands:

Scottish Command	- 38,000
Northern Command	- 16,000
Eastern Command	- 22,000
Southern Command	- 20,000
Western Command	- 41,000

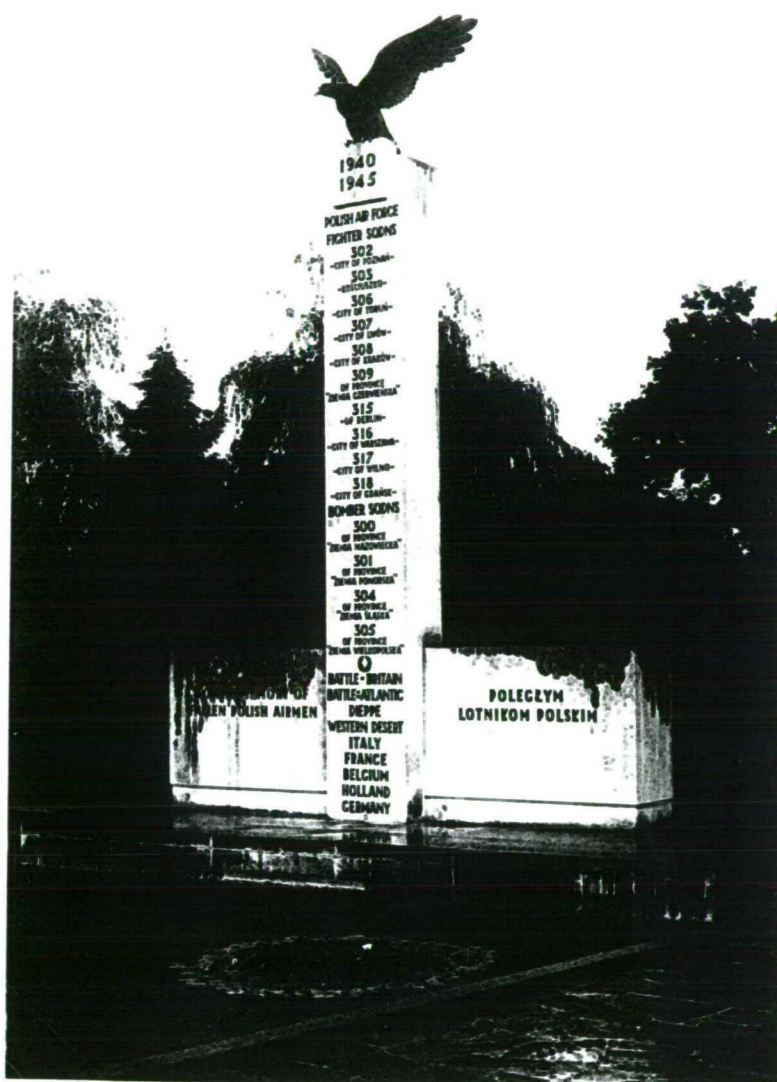
=====
137,000

[121]

CHAPTER THREE

"Góralu Czy Ci Nie Żal..."

The Polish Armed Forces Decide.



Polish Air Force Memorial
Northolt, London.

CHAPTER THREE

Whenever Poles of a certain generation meet over a bottle of vodka, they invariably turn to a sentimental song that reminds them of the melancholia of exile - a situation with which Poles are only too familiar.

"Góralu, czy ci nie żal,
Odchodzić od stron ojczystych.
Świerkowych lasów i hal,
I tych potoków srebrzystych.

Góralu, czy ci nie żal?
Góralu wracaj do hal!

Góral, don't you feel sad,
To leave your own native land.
The pastures and forests of spruce,
And those silvery brooks.

Góral, don't you feel sad?
Góral return to your valley!

The "Góral" of the song, the Highlander of the Polish Tatra mountains, looks back at his home with tears in his eyes, knowing he will never see it again; a feeling that generations of Poles have, all too often, had to go through.

Polish history, dotted as it is with partitions, revolutions and insurrections, has been the mother of exiles and emigres; so much so that it is estimated that there are some 15 million Poles and people of Polish extraction living beyond Poland's borders. The

three partitions of Poland at the end of the 18th Century led to the emigrations of 1771, 1792 and 1794. The Polish insurrection in 1830 led to what became known as the "Great Emigration" [Wielka Emigracja] and a flood of patriotic outpourings from the leading lights of Polish culture in exile: Chopin, Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Krasiński and Norwid. The failed risings of 1846 and 1848 led to a fresh wave of emigration as did the "January Insurrection" of 1863 - the year of the so-called "Young Emigration" [Młoda Emigracja].

The Polish Armed Forces which found themselves under British command in Northern Europe and the Mediterranean in 1945 were part of a long and unhappy tradition and the dilemma that faced them had been faced by generations of Poles before: to return to Poland or not?

The effects of this new Polish Diaspora are discussed in Poland today in a way that would have been impossible fifty years ago. General Paszkowski, an officer of the "People's" Polish Air Force writes:

"The troops of the Polish Armed Forces in the West were not - unfortunately - permitted to fulfil their dreams of a victorious return, in closed ranks, to a liberated Fatherland. Thousands remained abroad; thousands had to follow a long and difficult road before returning to their country - a country in which more than one of these soldiers had to suffer the bitterness of humiliation and undeserved suffering." [1]

In 1945, however, the Warsaw authorities were not so understanding. It served the new regime's propaganda

purposes to paint all those who returned to Poland as patriots and those who did not as bourgeois landowners, 'kulaks' and counter-revolutionaries with no interest in the welfare of Poland. As one repatriate wrote:

"To return or not to return? This dilemma split our Army into two camps. In the first rank of those who decided to remain belonged those whom the revolution in Poland had seized their estates and fortunes." [2]

Many of the Poles who returned to Poland were full of criticism of their officers - for that matter many of the Poles who did not return were filled with the same allegations of self-service and corruption.

"Towns were crumbling into ruins, people were dying by the thousand, the fate of the world was hanging on a hair yet the Poles in London were doing everything except what they should have been doing. The pilots were dying - let them die; brave lads. The Army - lovely boys - was going into battle. Orders; fine words; crosses. In the offices where these orders were printed sat such types - so much bickering; so much filth and nothing else." [3]

Even Colonel Kuropieska, whose writing is marked by its very reasonableness, comments that of all the Polish officers the worst were in Britain. Many had been given no command or had fallen into disfavour and had been, as the colonel put it, "discarded" [wybrakowani]. [4]

One former Polish soldier, Jean Carrer, puts forward a criticism that was often made by men who had seen service with the AK in Poland and had then made their way to London. These men...

"...bitterly complained of the behaviour of even high ranking officers in London. There was no comparison between their comrades-in-arms in the

Wilno AK and those who surrounded them in the London staff. The Wilno AK were filled only by highly motivated soldiers, ready to serve and die for their country. They did not join the AK to receive a promotion or a salary, because neither was given often. The London staff frequently consisted of the people who were not fit for the frontline service or whose motivation was to have a good time." [5]

This criticism goes beyond a mere question of personality. Some have gone as far as to claim a conspiracy between the British Government and the Polish High Command. Kazimierz Koźniewski, writing in Warsaw in 1960, questioned the motives of the "London" Poles:

"In 1945 or 1946 all of them could have returned. They chose emigration; they gave way to the determined propaganda of the so-called "London" camp, members of the former Polish Government who, disregarding the good of the country needing hands for reconstruction and disregarding the personal tragedy of family separation, unleashed a campaign against the returnees stamping them as traitors. For many families this decision to stay in emigration has been the source of great tragedy and a tragedy that is still alive today. It is difficult to determine how many of those who stayed abroad regret their decision. The "London" politics are today finally bankrupt but its fruit remains in the form of several thousand Poles living in a new emigration." [6]

General Machalski, former military attaché to Turkey, was no less unequivocal in his condemnation of the "London" camp of which he was, nominally at least, a member. It was clear the British were having trouble dealing with the Poles so, Machalski alleges, they bribed the Poles into submission.

"So they [the British] had a different idea. They invited the elders of the Polish General Staff to London and bought them like some negro cacique.

For the price of a lifelong general's pension they agreed to lay down their arms and send their unarmed soldiers to England." [7]

Having said this there was still a desire to return to Poland from the rank and file of the Poles - a desire that could not be quelled by the promise of exile and a British passport. As one Cadet Officer wrote:

"The Prime Minister Churchill wants to give us the British citizenship after the war. I appreciate this, but it wasn't the reason we opposed the Germans. Whether this would mean that Mr Churchill doesn't believe in his own word that Poland would be really free and independent country." [8][sic]

The campaign run by the Poles who opposed repatriation to Poland was particularly bitter and vitriolic and, on occasion, deadly. Reactions depended very much on the individuals approach to the events in Poland. Linowski, for example, complained that it created for itself...

"...a false picture of Poland expounding and exaggerating every negative aspect associated with the process of revolutionary change that was taking place in the country." [9]

Mrowiec continues this theme:

"Our country was described as a Soviet training ground in which Polish women were being raped, in which the Polish language was being blunted and in which churches were being turned into barracks or 'houses of immorality'. Speeches, discussions, articles and military orders were all poisoned by a hatred of those who in Poland were turning castles and palaces into sanatoria and rest homes. It has to be admitted that the cancer of doubt and uncertainty began to eat at the heart of more than one soldier who could not come to an independent and objective view of the situation." [10]

The Dzierżyński Academy of Military Politics published a similar denunciation in 1967:

"The Soviet Union was portrayed in the worst possible light, usually by way of generalised slander. So, for example, by using all available means, the lie was spread that the Red Army, entering Poland, was murdering old people and children and was deporting people en masse to Siberia or enlisting them into its ranks. With the help of its press it published news of the alleged raping of Polish women and, continuing the line, of their subsequent suicides.

In the area of anti-Soviet propaganda the propaganda bureau of the 2nd Corps was not even surpassed by Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry. The propaganda was so acute that even the British had to take an interest in the matter." [11]

The substance of these "lies" and "slanders" are dealt with in the next chapter. Rutkowski is, however, correct in saying that the British took an interest in Polish produced propaganda and for that matter the propaganda that was reaching the Poles from outside.

In Italy both the Germans and the Polish Provisional Government broadcast their messages over the airwaves to the Polish forces. This radio war became known as the "war of the Wandas" as the German "Radio Wanda" vied with "Radio Kościuszko", sponsored by Wanda Wasilewska in Poland, to get its message across. Whereas few believed the words that were broadcast from Poland it was more difficult to ignore the Germans. As Melchior Wankowicz, a respected war-correspondent, admitted: although "Radio Wanda" told a lot of lies it told a lot of truth as well, especially about the situation in Poland. [12]

This was brought to the attention of the War Office and in April, 1944, AFHQ issued a memo to the

Polish Base Censor to pick out any references to German radio broadcasts like the one from a Private in June:

"We can believe this time what says German Radio that NKVD arrests, kills or deports the Polish population who did not resist actively the German: This is the truth for the Russian motto - "Who is not with us is against us". The West is silent and commands to be silent in order not to endanger itself to his Ally." [13][sic]

The Foreign Office were equally concerned to counter this German propaganda that seemed to be having a harmful impact on the Poles. For the troops in Italy new short-wave bands were set up and in Scotland a new medium-wave band was launched so that the BBC could 'explain' events in Poland. [14] The Poles had a surfeit of information but very little could be deemed as balanced. The BBC would not say anything critical of the Soviet Union - a fact that rankled with the Poles and, what was worse, often expounded the Soviet viewpoint while the British censored the Polish military press. The Germans were rubbing salt into Polish wounds with constant carping about Katyń, and the "bloody hordes of Stalin" entering Poland - they even had a leaflet campaign [see Appendix D] and while the Poles secretly, and sometimes even openly, knew much of what they were saying was true, it went against the grain to agree with the Nazis. The Communist broadcasts from Poland were the least convincing simply because their message of revolution was too hostile for its audience.

The Polish Base Censor picked up the comments of one officer:

"I listen sometimes to the Russian broadcast in Polish. They speak in such vile manner about our government and about our political chiefs. It is funny but I found out from the Russian news that we Polish troops in Italy are Nazi and we don't want to fight with the Allied troops against Jerries." [15][sic]

This "fascist" label that had been given to the Poles in the West was not only inaccurate but also offensive to the Poles, even to many who had returned to Poland. Bernard Newman recalls a conversation with one such repatriated Polish soldier:

"I was captured by the Germans in Italy, got away when they collapsed, and am now in the Polish Army again - in Poland. It worries me - and makes me mad - when I hear some of our bosses talking about General Anders as a fascist. After all, he was fighting the fascists while these people were sitting pretty in Moscow. I fought at Tobruk and Cassino, I suppose that is fascist?" [16]

The two principal allegations laid by Warsaw and Moscow against the Poles in the West was that, firstly, they did not want to fight against the Germans, as in this article from Moscow's "Pravda" of February, 1944:

"The emigre Polish Government and its servants wage no fight against the Germans, do not wish to wage it and cannot wage it...

The emigre Polish Government, which includes fascist political cheapjacks, has lost all sense of reality. It lives in a phantom world of Hitler mirage. It has completely severed itself from the real Polish peoples, who are waging a relentless struggle against the German invaders and their Polish assistants. The London Polish political cheapjacks have nobody to back them in Poland except the pro-fascist agencies which are helping the Germans, and the simpletons they have misled.

All Poles who value Poland's honour and independence march with the "Union of Polish Patriots" in the USSR." [17]

The second assault on the Poles is that they actively collaborated with pro-Nazi elements - in particular the Chetniks in Yugoslavia. How far the Chetniks were pro-Nazi as opposed to anti-Communist is today a moot point, yet at the time any association with the Mihailovich Chetniks was enough to tar the Poles with the epithet of fascists. Colonel Sidor wrote of the mutual co-operation between Anders and the Chetniks and noted that after the execution of General Mihailovich special masses were said by the chaplains of 2 Polcorps. [18] The Tito regime was not above complaining about the Poles and its influence among the anti-Communist opposition. It complained to the Foreign Office in February 1946:

"The Polish Emigrants Army is in close touch with the groups of Quisling formations, which are at present in Italy, in particular the Ustashi (Croat terrorists). In Italy these Quisling groups enjoy the material support of General Anders' Army." [19]

The Foreign Office steadfastly refused to rise to Belgrade's bait. Since the Yugoslavs had produced no evidence for their allegations so they had to be discounted. Czerkowski recounts the story of Bolesław Rozek who was escorting war criminal Ante Pavelic to Trieste to stand trial in Yugoslavia. Instead of thanks, he was called a "Polish fascist from Anders' fascist army". [20] This came as something of a culture

shock to Rozek.

The propaganda that was issued by those advocating non-return to Poland proved to be highly successful. The fact that so many Poles did go back gives testimony to the power of homesickness rather than to such Poles being won over by the pronouncements of Warsaw. The fact that so many Poles did not go back shows just how much fear had been put in the minds of the individual soldier.

"Less happy, but for that more damaging, was the propaganda designed to frighten those who wished to return to their country. They continued to announce through megaphones that those who went back would be sent to the 'land of the Polar bear'. Obviously the British wanted as many Poles as possible to stay as their guests. The contents of letters that were received from Poland were varied: some encouraged return others warned against it. As it turned out the letters of this second category often came from the wives of soldiers who had started new lives with other men. At night there were lively discussions on this subject. Some people had nervous breakdowns as a result." [21]

Dzikiewicz, himself a repatriate, is quite wrong in his assertion that the propaganda not to return came from the British, in fact nothing could be further from the truth. The point he makes about the mental anguish the propaganda caused is, however, a valid one.

There were many reports of suicide among the Polish Forces and among the Displaced Persons scattered across Europe. One account from Camp Kaefertal in Germany reports that as 1,600 Polish former POWs were being repatriated to Poland, one of the officers took out his revolver and shot himself. [22] Another report

from Brazil was the case of Edward Kurdziel who had been in Rio since June, 1946, but had only found a low paid job. Kurdziel had gone to the British Embassy in November to see the trade attaché for help. As the attaché left the room to ring a Polish company in Brazil, Kurdziel shot himself in the chest "in a fit of depression and helplessness". The story made the Rio press and was picked up by the Warsaw Ministry of Information and Propaganda who claimed, with some accuracy, that the British were trying to keep the whole story as quiet as possible. According to the FO report on the event the local papers in Rio had...

"...expressed annoyance that they were unable to obtain full information from the Press Section of the Police Headquarters and suggested that an undue amount of respect was being shown for foreign diplomatic privilege." [23]

The FO minute to the report stated: "I don't think any action is called for. Luckily the press here has not, so far as I know, mentioned the incident." The conclusion was that, obviously, the man had been "mentally unbalanced" as it was unlikely he had chosen the embassy for his demise. Furthermore, it was not the responsibility of the British Government to look after the Poles once they were abroad and out of the armed forces. The Poles "...should go to the Warsaw people with their troubles...which they refused to do."

In January, 1947, the "West Sussex County Times" ran a story that Karl Pazdziernick [sic] had been found

hanging from a tree at Mannings Heath Golf Club. "Evidence was given that he was worried at not being able to rejoin his wife in Germany." [24]

Despite the mental anguish the propaganda caused, it continued unabated. The disillusioned Gen. Machalski continues:

"Gen. Anders, for whom there was no road to Poland, had seen his world turn upside-down so he commenced a hysterical propaganda against returning home. Sick people who had volunteered for repatriation were brutally thrown out of hospital, the healthy were isolated in special camps, the infected had to be separated. This violent propaganda had its results as a sizeable number of soldiers decided against returning."

[25]

Reading the official pronouncements from the General Staff today they do not appear unreasonable. Certainly they appealed to the soldiers' sense of patriotism and sense of history, General Sosnkowski, the former Polish C-in-C, said in a speech:

"What have the Poles been dying for the last five years? In whose name have the rivers of our blood covered the ground in Italy? The Carpathian and Kresowa Divisions, the Lwowska Brigade and the Wilenska Brigade.... They did not think of themselves or about some internal quarrel when they fell like corn cut with a scythe. They were faithful and modest soldiers whom death had made equal. They died with the name of the Fatherland on their lips and with a faith in its future.[...] They died, as die other soldiers in Poland and abroad, for all of Poland and the future of Poland decided by Polish hands on the Polish land." [26]

General Rudnicki in his Order of the Day on the 6th July, 1945, also made a patriotic appeal to his men after he became GOC 1st Armoured Division:

"Our duty as the Polish occupation Division on

German soil, under Allied command, will be accomplished with loyalty and honour. We will one day return to Poland, but only with arms in our hands - to the Poland whom we have dreamt about during the last five years of the war. Poland truly free and independent. We will return to wipe the tears of our women and children, and to ensure that law and justice, and not foreign domination, will reign in Poland.

We will never give up our struggle to free Poland and all the other enslaved nations, and we will live up to our traditional motto, "For your freedom and ours". In this struggle we shall not be alone. Polish soldiers! This is our position, our will, and our decision." [27]

General Anders, the bane of the Foreign Office, was the man most associated with the anti-return campaign. His pronouncements that Poland was under a foreign occupation did little to enhance his popularity with the British but it was the message many Polish troops wanted to hear. Anders' warning to his subordinates was reproduced in the War Diary of the 13 Battn, 5 Kresowa Division:

"Among us we may still find some tired people, some people who are weak, who do not feel they have the strength to go with us on our journey which must eventually lead to victory but will still present us with more than one problem. We will not keep anyone in our army by force" General Anders underlines in all his speeches that anyone who volunteers for repatriation to Poland must be either physically or mentally ill because no one else would willingly return to Poland under a foreign government. We do not want sick people amongst us. In our particular situation the value of an army is judged more by the quality of its men rather than the number and General Anders does not want any soldier who returns to Poland and then meets some miserable fate to be able to say that he had not been warned in time by his Commanding Officer. The General further states that from the moment our erstwhile colleague volunteers for return and he is sent off to the Allied transit camp the General would take no further responsibility for his fate.

Our newest colleagues who came to us, throwing away their German uniforms, were recognised and are continued to be recognised as good Poles. To the Soviet authorities they will be, above all, "fascists", "Volksdeutsche", "Spies", "deserters", etc. etc. We know from personal experience what the Soviet authorities do with those who are inconvenient to them.

If anyone thinks they will return to Poland and see their family and then find themselves in the heart of Russia let them have no pretensions to us." [28]

Another of Anders' warnings read:

"We considered and continue to consider them as good Poles. We will not stop them from taking this step. They have a free decision to either stay with us or to go where terror reigns to be persecuted by a foreign occupation." [29]

As a 'them and us' situation developed, so it threatened to spiral out of control. Some of the less political Generals recognised that the group that gained the label of "Communists" were in serious danger. General Sosabowski, former GOC Polish Parachute Brigade, writes that the title of "Communists" came not only from the rank and file but from certain officers. The relationship between these officers and the future repatriates became so bad that it often became necessary to separate them. [30]

The Warsaw authorities were well aware of what was happening in the Polish camps but were powerless to intervene. Warsaw's Military Missions constantly complained about the attitude of those Poles who did not want to return to Poland and of their treatment towards those who did. One report states:

"Today this soldier - this faithless one

[sprzeniewierca] - to his commanders and to his, up to this point, friends; to his comrades in arms with whom he shared the pain of battle at Monte Cassino and Falaise, at Tobruk and Narvik, has become a leper. Because he is returning to his country he has at once stopped being a patriot." [31]

Lt Proczka, another of Warsaw's men in Italy, wrote to his superiors complaining about the treatment of possible repatriates in DP camps at Barletta and Trani that were run by the Polish 2nd Corps. Men from the Corps were using pressure to discourage return. In particular, posters had been put up all over the camp showing a mouse in Italy looking at a mousetrap in Poland. Since the camp had been "hermetically sealed off" by Anders' men, only their views were being put forward. Proczka also complained that the UNRRA camp at Bari and the repatriation camp at Regio Emilia were also under the influence of Anders. He complained that special 'hitsquads' were coming from Bologna and Modena to work on those who might be wavering. [32]

Zygmunt Boger, a Pole who had served in the German Army and found himself under pressure in his POW camp, recounts:

"Every Saturday, between 10 and 12 in the morning we would form a horseshoe on the barrack parade ground and a jeep with a megaphone would drive up and someone from Anders' army would speak to us. He would tell us that there was no use in us thinking about returning to Poland, that Poland was a subject country dependent on the Soviet Union...." [33]

The theme that Poland was a vassal state to Moscow was hotly denied by Warsaw's people. Dr Prawin, head of the

Polish Mission in Berlin, told representatives of the British FO that he thought it was undesirable for the British "...to treat Poland as [a] mere adjunct of the Soviet Union". To which Hankey minuted: "Cordially support his last point." [34] This, not surprisingly, was not a view shared by Anders:

"Our country, deprived of the rights of speech, looks towards us. It wishes to see us in the land of our ancestors - to that end we are striving and longing from the bottom of our hearts - but it does not want to see us as slaves of a foreign force: It wants to see us with our banners flying as forerunners of true freedom.

As such a return is impossible today, we must wait in closed and disciplined ranks for a favourable change of conditions." [35]

Anders was well aware of the unusual position he and his soldiers found themselves in. The post-war paradox was that while all the other armies in the world were anxiously awaiting demobilisation, the Poles wanted to keep their forces intact [36], although some did find the situation rather perplexing. Edmund Thielmann relates his feelings at the situation he was in:

"The war was long over and still our position was unclear. The emigre propaganda did everything it could to create confusion and doubt in our minds so as to impede our making a decision about returning to Poland. We were disorientated.

- What do you think about the growth in the number of soldiers? - I asked Ireneusz.

- Someone has to keep the Japanese down. Don't worry yourself, Polish cannon-fodder is still valuable - he answered." [37]

Thielmann could not understand why the Polish forces were being upgraded - for example the 2nd Armoured Brigade was raised to a Division and the 14th Armoured

Brigade was brought into service. It all seemed very strange to him. Eventually Thielmann volunteered for repatriation and went back to Poland.

There was a darker side to the campaign against returning to Poland. Those who volunteered often had to suffer the indignity of being ostracised by their comrades. Tadeusz Kochanowicz writes that after he had made his decision to return he was told that no one would have anything to do with him and he would be treated like a man infected with gonorrhoea. [38] The fact that men volunteering to go back to Poland had to sit at separate tables so as not to "infect" others was a minor inconvenience compared to the reports of men being attacked after requesting repatriation. Mrowiec reports that a group of these "excommunicated" soldiers were being driven by road from San Basilia to the Cervinara repatriation camp when, on a certain bend in a mountain pass, the driver jumped out of the vehicle leaving it to plummet over the edge. [39] Many soldiers decided it would be safer to wait until the 2nd Corps was brought to the UK before requesting repatriation. At least in Britain the matter would not be so dependent on the largesse of the "Anders clique". Although Mrowiec has few kind words to say about his Polish commanders, he gives grudging praise to the British saying: "It has to be admitted, however, that the British authorities looked after us with great care

and equipped us well for our return to Poland."

One of the popular metaphors used at the time to address the issue of repatriation was that of a railway journey. Nowakowski, in his "At the railway stop" [Na Przystanku], explained that, whereas some Poles would be catching the train back to Poland, most would not and would have to wait at the station. Maybe one day their train would arrive. [40]

The commemorative album of the Polish Parachute Brigade continues this theme:

"Our mutual road, the road we have all followed to a free Poland, remains the same - only we will no longer travel it together. Some will return to Poland sooner, others later. Each of us will decide, according to his own conscience, when the right moment to return is. [...]

Those who leave us now will leave us as brothers. We will shake hands, thank each other for our mutual effort and look in each others eyes. This open look will confirm our complete mutual respect. The aim that binds us in our separation remains the same: A free and independent Fatherland." [41]

The pronouncements from the Parachute Brigade are typical of the style emanating from the Polish Forces in Germany - a style less extreme than those in Italy. The 1st Armoured Division had not been through the Soviet prison system like so many in the 2nd Corps and so viewed the Soviet Union in a different light. Even Warsaw's Academy of Military Politics recognised the difference:

"It must be said that despite the grief at losing the land in the east, and in contrast to the Polish Second Corps, the 1st Armoured Division still considered that the Germans were Enemy

Number One - although the USSR was also regarded as an enemy. Regardless of this, however, there was no special anti-Soviet Campaign in the 1st Armoured Division." [42]

General Sosabowski, one of the more moderate members of the Polish High Command, tried to reassure volunteers for repatriation that they were not the pariah some would make out:

"Lads - There seems to have been a misunderstanding here. Who doesn't want to return home? We all want and desire this - those who go back now, and those who have decided not to go back yet. Its just like passengers waiting for a train. Some - that's you, want to be off at all costs on the first available train and some - your comrades, have yet to decide which train to take." [43]

Despite the masses of propaganda and counter-propaganda that was floating about at the end of the war, most Polish soldiers knew whether they were going to return to Poland or not - the information provided by senior officers only served to confirm certain opinions.

The opinion not to go back to Poland was viewed with some sympathy by "The Economist" of August 1946:

"In fairness to them [the Poles] it must be said that their experience is sufficient comment on Mr Bevin's declaration of March 10 [sic - 20th] in which he said that it was the "duty" of the Polish exiles to return and that a Polish memorandum, which no Polish Minister had even troubled to sign, was a sufficient guarantee for their personal safety. [...]

No promises made by, or on behalf of, the Polish Government can inspire confidence as long as the political police, whether Soviet or Polish Communist, remain a law to themselves. In March of last year the Polish Underground leaders who were given a formal safe conduct by General Ivanov were nevertheless arrested on arrival at his

headquarters. After such examples of treachery the Polish exiles do not believe in any assurances which come from Warsaw." [44]

This scepticism was a view shared by thousands of Poles; good faith was a commodity in short supply. Bernard Newman met one Pole who explained why he had not returned to Poland:

"You cannot picture it," said one man. "I was in a lumber camp in North Russia, almost in rags. You can guess the winter conditions. We were worked shockingly hard on a minimum of food. One day I said to a Russian officer who appeared friendly: 'But why do you treat us like this? In your own interests you should feed us, so that we can work properly.' He replied: 'Why should we? We have tried out the system: at the present rate you will last for about five years. Then you will be used up, but there are plenty more where you come from!' Are you surprised to find that I don't want to go back to serve the remainder of my five years?" [45]

Mieczysław Stelmaszyński was another Pole who had his reasons for not returning to Poland - he had nowhere to return to:

"Remember! That was our problem! To return to our country or to continue our wanderings. We received all sorts of horrific information from Poland - it was destroyed, burnt down. This played no small role. There was other information. That the Polish authorities of the time had completely subordinated themselves to the Soviets. Information about the arrests and deportations to the Gulag - in particular the soldiers of the Home Army. Wilno and Lwów had been taken away from us at Yalta. Many people had nowhere to return to; just like me. [...]

Some, paying no attention to anything, departed for Poland. Others preferred to wait, just in case the Third World War did break out, and yet others emigrated to the USA, Canada, Australia. The English were chasing the Poles out to Poland and our people considered those who went as traitors to the Fatherland! That's the way it was." [46]

Jean Carrer explained his reason for not returning:

"One of the biggest human tragedies was that these people who dreamed to return to Poland and join their families, when pressed to go back by the British Government were reluctant or refused to return. It is doubtful that anyone can describe this irony of fate, as it is impossible to describe hunger, love or hatred unless one is affected by such feelings. Next door to my quarters lived several officers. It was heartbreaking to see their internal fight. They all asked themselves the same questions. If they decided to stay in England, they would never see their beloved country and family; if they returned, they would be arrested or would not get any work. In both these cases instead of a help to their families they would become liabilities to them and would require their support in the form of parcels to a prison or another mouth to be fed. [...] They decided to wait. It seemed to others that compared to them I did not have any serious problems. My wife was with me and expecting a child soon. I did not have to ask myself the Shakespearian question: "to be or not to be" or, in any case, "to return to Poland or not to return." It was clear to me that I could not return and I did not have any intention of giving myself up to certain death after a successful escape just one year ago." [47]

Much of the propaganda against returning to Poland dwelt on the fact that it was the duty of 'patriotic' Poles not to return - they were expected to wait and fight against the Communist take-over in Poland. Couched in the terms of an idealistic crusade, the 'wait and see' gained credibility. Janusz Krajewski remained unconvinced, contending that he had not stayed in Britain from any idealistic motive - the idealists were, in fact, the ones who went back to Poland to help in reconstruction - and he freely admitted that he did not go back to Poland from fear.

The fear of returning was an overwhelming barrier

that would prevent thousands from returning. Another Polish soldier who did not go back explains:

"What was I to do? Grim news reached us from the homeland. Everyday newspapers and radio broadcast news of the terror in Poland, of the waves of arrests, court cases, sentences. Those who made their way from Poland added new snippets and career gossips magnified each small detail until they achieved the grandest proportions. Drop by drop the poison of fear which remained from Italy took hold. Nobody then was in a position to establish how much truth there was in all this and how much rumour. Everyone believed the worst. In our situation the rallying cry, "Return! The homeland is being rebuilt and needs your help" - far from reaching our hearts, missed its aim.

I turned down then the chance of returning to Poland, as did thousands of others. I became an emigrant out of fear!" [49]

According to Nicholas Bethell it was not a fear of death that frightened the Poles from returning to Poland but rather it was the hopelessness of opposition to the Soviets and their acolytes. Indeed the soldiers who refused to return were, in general, the bravest troops in the Polish Forces who had been with the colours for the longest. During the war the Nazis had murdered millions yet there was hope - the Poles knew that sooner or later the Nazis would be gone and it was more a question of surviving in the meantime. The Soviet Army was a different proposition altogether. According to Bethell the West had "effectively abandoned Poland. There was no hope of Poland being 'liberated' from Stalinism." [50]

"The Economist" of August, 1946, took up the same theme:

"The Polish exiles are "non-repatriable" on the principle that a burnt child dreads the fire. This is not cowardice; the soldiers of Poland have demonstrated many times over that they do not fear death in battle. But they see no cause to face death without battle and without prospects of victory." [51]

Jerzy Lerski was a member of the Polish SOE who had parachuted into occupied Poland during the war to contact the underground and had made his way to the UK again. No one could accuse him of being a coward and yet he too did not return to Poland after the war. Although Lerski knew how to risk his life he had no intention of throwing it away. [52]

Many of the Poles took it upon themselves to tell the British authorities just why they were refusing to return to Poland and many wrote to Bevin directly at the Foreign Office. One artillery colonel wrote:

"I trust the opportunity of returning to Poland will occur again. I will crawl back to Poland on all fours, when it is vacated by the NKVD, the Red Army and Messrs. BIERUT, ZYMIERSKI, RADKIEWICZ, ETC."

Another soldier wrote:

"I will accept anything that happens to me, but I don't want to fall for a second time into the hands of Communist liberators."

Szczepan Sadieski wrote to Bevin saying:

"We know, as well as you know, that there is neither freedom of the press or freedom of speech there. We know, from eyewitnesses returning from Poland, of the mass disappearance of people for no reason. You persuade us to return to that sort of Poland! No, Sir! A hundred times, no!" [53]

The War Office also had a good insight into the minds of the Polish troops. At the end of July, 1944, the

Polish Base Censor noted these comments from one sergeant:

"I will never go back to Poland if she is under Russian control because I don't want to be in the Red Russian Paradise. It is better to die than to go there. Really I don't know what I shall do after the War."

Another officer wrote:

"There is no return for us to the Soviet republic of Poland which seems to be the newest invention of our Allies. Those who know Russia from newspapers only or from propaganda don't realise that the life under the Soviet regime is not for civilised people." [54]

General Anders gave an interview to the former Mayor of New York and the then head of UNRRA, LaGuardia, in which he frankly outlined his views on why Poles were not returning to Poland:

LaGuardia: Why don't your soldiers want to return to Poland?

Anders: Poland is under Soviet occupation. The soldiers of the 2nd Corps know Russia very well since up to 60% of my men have been through the prisons and camps of the USSR.

LaGuardia: If the Polish Provisional Government gave the Allies a guarantee that any returning soldier would in no way be persecuted would many of them volunteer for return?

Anders: Today none of the troops believe in the pledges of either Poland or Russia. Not one commitment and not one pledge had been upheld by the Russians - not even Stalin's personal assurances to me. What then can Warsaw's guarantees be worth when they are so dependent on Moscow? [...]

LaGuardia: Your soldiers are, of course, good Poles and all of them, I am sure, would like to live in Poland rather than wandering around the world. To work in the reconstruction of the country and to change the regime it would be necessary to return to Poland and to

influence the current of political life. Do I understand the situation correctly?

Anders: We are all waiting for the moment when we can return - but return to Poland and not a Soviet puppet. We will return when the Russian Army leaves Poland. In the Corps I have soldiers of the most varied faiths: Catholics (the majority), Uniates, Orthodox, Jews and Muslims. Nearly 75% of their number are workers and peasants. Everyone could, and can still, go back but at this present moment yet they all know that they would not return to a free country or a normal life. The majority would end up in prison camps or in Siberia. Any influence in political life or in economic life is as impossible in Poland as it is in Russia." [55]

Anders became known as the arch anti-Communist yet he apologised to no one for his opinions. He was asked by the Italian paper "Voce Adriatica" why his soldiers went around Italy pulling down all the "Long Live Stalin" posters, to which Anders replied: "To understand that you had to have been there...." [56]

As well as the pressure from within the military establishment from senior officers and from colleagues, there was the pressure from friends and family in Poland. Foster Anderson visited Poland in 1946 and asked some members of the soldiers' families for messages to take back with him regarding the return of their relatives. "What shall I say to your son?" he asked one mother; "'Tell him I want to see him.'" "You will do no such thing," snapped the daughter, "it would be madness for him to return and you know that mother.'" [57] The war and the political situation afterwards split families and it was the troops with

families in Poland that felt the misery of exile most acutely. As Mrowiec wrote:

"For years nostalgia had been gnawing at us and a million times on our distant path of war we had thought of our mothers, or wives and our children. In our dreams we visited our homes and asked ourselves if our dearest were alive or if they had anything to eat - we never received an answer: Anyone who doesn't understand this will never understand the most worthy impulse that inclined us to return." [58]

The political divide separated the families of even the most powerful in Poland. The Commander of the Polish Armed Forces in the East, Poland's Minister of Defence, Marshal Zymierski had, according to Kuropieska, two brothers who served in the West - Stanisław who was in London and Józef who was in Palestine with an armoured unit. [59]

There were, of course, families who said they wanted their relatives to come back to Poland from exile. Foster Anderson met the son of a colonel and asked his usual question of whether he should tell him to return to Poland. The son's first piece of advice was that his father should not get mixed up in émigré politics as it would permanently damage his chances of returning to Poland. As to the return the son's answer was:

"Yes. I cannot bear to think of him as an émigré exiled from Poland. That is no life for an old man. If he were young and without a family that would be another matter. He could build up his life abroad. But he is old and he is too Polish to do that."

Anderson asked the son if he worried about his father being arrested or imprisoned:

"I do not know anyone returning having been sent to Siberia."

"That does not answer my question."

Again silence. Then the youth burst out: "My mother wants him back. He may have got into his head that hopeless idea of Anders' that Polish officers must become crusaders and cut themselves off from their families so as not to be weakened in their resolve."

"Crusade for what?" I asked.

"The freedom of Poland." [60]

Another soldier who received a letter from home was Edmund Thielmann who in March, 1947, got a letter from his mother asking him when he was coming home. He describes his reasoning for returning home:

"I can't put it off any longer. Its time to make a decision.... Am I to join the PRC and cut myself off from everything that has been important to me up to now and in the name of which the account of wrongs had been evened? No, I can't do that. It would mean renouncing my national identity....

- Colonel, I would like to report that I am returning to Poland!

- I wish you well - the commander of the regiment shook my hand and smiled sorrowfully... He had signed himself up for a course in tailoring. I felt sorry for the old soldier." [61]

Jan Podoski, who returned to Poland on a fact-finding mission for UNRRA with three tons of penicillin, was told by Cardinal Sapieha that although there would be bad times ahead, as many Poles as possible should return. This, notes Podoski, was not what his senior commanders wanted to hear and he was treated with scepticism and his popularity within his unit fell to zero. [62]

Karol Popiel was one of the Poles who agreed with Bevin that his patriotic duty was in Poland:

"The reader who is used to the emigre slogans may say that this was probably naive or an agreement to the Yalta accord. No. It is simply an admission of the unquestionable fact that the mainstream of national life runs along the Wisła and Odra. It is there that the nation examines the worth of its politicians. Above all the country wants to see in its leaders people who are ready to run risks alongside the nation." [63]

Tadeusz Czerkowski was one of the few frontline officers from the 2nd Corps who returned to Poland. He seems to have been swayed by the changes that had occurred in the country. He writes that the men of his artillery regiment were all cheered up when an AK Major informed them that it was unthinkable that Poland would revert back to its pre-war way of doing things. According to the Major the people had turned very Leftist. [64] Although, if left to its own devices, Poland might have turned to the political Left after the war - just as Britain had - there was little support for the type of government thrust upon Poland under Soviet auspices, hence few Polish troops returned home to support the 'revolution'. Most Polish soldiers were not concerned with the political polemics occurring around them. Tadeusz Kochanowicz's main fear was of spending the rest of his life as an exile in Britain and, as such, made the only decision possible - he returned to Poland. [65]

.

In the Autumn of 1945, the British began to move the question of repatriation at a faster pace and asked the members of the Polish Armed Forces to volunteer for return. According to Kuropieska, 37,497 elected to go to Poland in this 'plebiscite'. The areas of operations that the volunteers came from were:

United Kingdom	23,000
Italy/Middle East	14,000
Germany	400
Polish Air Force	57
Polish Navy	40

Or, expressed as percentages of the total force in that area, the numbers were:

United Kingdom	38.8%	
Italy	10.8%	
Middle East	6.0%	
Germany	1.2%	[66]

This represented a total of 17.2% of the total number of Poles serving under British command.

The War Office strongly denied that they had ever organised a 'plebiscite' among the Poles but, after a question from Vice-Admiral Taylor in the Commons, the Government admitted the numbers who had volunteered for return. There were only slight variations from Kuropieska's figures:

United Kingdom	33.0%
BAOR [Germany]	1.0%
AFHQ [Italy]	14.0%
MEF [Middle East]	4.5%

From a total of 207,000 troops, there had been 37,060 volunteers for repatriation or 17.9% of the total. [67] The figures for the Polish Navy and Air Force were even

less encouraging. According to an October, 1945, FO report to Hankey, then working in the British Embassy in Warsaw, from 4,000 naval personnel, only 30 to 40 had offered to return. From a total of 17,000 Polish Air Force personnel, only 57 men had volunteered - 50 'other ranks' and 7 officers of which only one was a Flying Officer. [68]

The Polish Forces tried to breakdown the figures to make sense of them and to establish who it was who was volunteering. The "Soldiers Daily" from the 19th December, 1945, proudly announced that the soldiers who declared themselves for repatriation in the 2nd Corps were not the soldiers who had been at Tobruk and Monte Cassino. By December, 1945, there were 14,207 Poles in Cervinara Repatriation Centre awaiting return.

CORPS TROOPS : BASE TROOPS : TOTAL

Officer - O/R : Officer - O/R : Officer - O/R

At Cervinara: 3 4,660 : 4 9,540 : 7 14,200

Of whom the following declared prior to 8th May, 1945:

3 2,600 : 4 2,900 : 7 5,500

Of these 5,500 'other ranks' 4,610 (83.81%) had formerly been in the German Army, 580 (10.54%) had been recruited from France, Italy and other areas. Of the men who had been with the Corps since the evacuation from the USSR, only 310 (5.63%) volunteered to go back to Poland.

A different breakdown of the figures were those who had seen action and those who had not:

Infantry	870	
Cavalry	65	
Armour	20	
Artillery	265	
Sappers	100	
Signals	35	
Military Police	5	
Supply/Transport	130	
Stores	10	
Engineers	40	Not in Action
Medical Services	160	with the Corps
	-----	-----
	1,700 (30.90%)	3,800 (69.09%)
	=====	=====
	5,500	

[69]

General Anders commented on these figure with some pride. He felt that the men of his army - the "Anders Army" - had not let him down. In "An Army in Exile" he wrote:

"It is significant that out of the 112,000 in the II Polish Army Corps at the end of 1945, only seven officers and 14,200 men applied for repatriation, 8,700 being men who had joined after the end of hostilities. Of those who had come with us from Russia, and had been with the Corps throughout the campaign, only 310 applied for repatriation. Two things exerted a great influence on the men in deciding them not to go home. First, was the considerable number of soldiers who, after repatriation, fled from Poland and found their way through Czechoslovakia and Germany back to Italy, where they gave the men eye-witness accounts of events in the home country. Second was the significant wording of the letters sent back to Italy." [70]

There has yet to be a definitive study of the Polish Forces and how many soldiers returned to Poland from any particular unit, however, the War Diaries of the larger formations do give some indication of how

the detachments were thinking. The diarist to Reconnaissance Platoon, 5 Battn, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Carpathian Div. noted with pride that after Bevin's "Keynote" campaign, not one soldier volunteered for repatriation, [71] a fact also noted by 4 Company, 4 Battn, of the 2nd Brigade. [72] Bevin's words seemed to be having little effect among the frontline troops in Italy. This was not a universal phenomenon - the 3rd Battn of the Polish Parachute Brigade saw a marked increase in repatriation after "Keynote". The unit size was 40 officers and 414 men and the diary notes the the number of troops who volunteered for repatriation:

		Officer:	Other Ranks	
24 January	1946 -		15	
3 April	1946 -		74	
6 May	1946 -		18	
16 July	1946 -	1 /	0	
5 August	1946 -		8	
19 August	1946 -	1 /	6	
16 September	1946 -		1	
12 October	1946 -		21	
18 October	1946 -		6	
24 March	1947 -	1 /	10	
		=====		[73]
		3 /	159	

The biggest jump in the figures came in April, 1946, just two weeks after Bevin's note was handed out. The 7th Workshop Company of 7 Division, a reserve unit that only came into existence at the end of the war, did not see a corresponding rise in March, 1946. The biggest move to Poland came in August, 1945, as 137 men returned to Poland - this was the best part of the unit's establishment. The unit was quickly brought up

to strength but in September a further 105 left and December saw another 13 go. By the start of 1946, most of the soldiers who were likely to go to Poland had already left so that by Bevin's March appeal only a further four volunteered. The next move to repatriation came in December, 1946, just after the creation of the Resettlement Corps. The unit had been brought to the UK in July, 1946, and the complement of the company was 10 Officers and 148 men - of this number nine officers and only 66 men joined the PRC. Six men went to Germany and three became PRC 'recalcitrants', the rest returned to Poland. [74] These results from a non-combatant unit were fairly typical in the Army. New units did not have the esprit de corps of others - when 7 Workshop Company disbanded, only 24 soldiers had been with the unit for over two years. The 14 Armoured Brigade, also formed at the end of the war, reported a serious drain on its manpower. By the end of August, 1945, there had been 335 declarations for return from among NCOs and 'other ranks' - this amounted to 9.6% of the Brigade; within this number, however, there were glaring differences across the board. 20% of the Signals Company returned to Poland, 32.8% of the Service Company returned and the Materials Park lost 43.5% of its troops. The report highlights the case of army cooks who seemed particularly prone to returning

to Poland - 14 Service Company had no cooks left in its ranks. [75]

The 65th Pomeranian Infantry Battalion, formed in January, 1945, also showed that these new units were more likely to return than the more established ones. The unit was formed in January yet on the 27th July, 1945, one officer and 154 'other ranks' returned to Poland. The numbers were quickly made up so that when the unit was moved to the UK its strength stood at 817 men yet, even here, a further 310 soldiers returned to Poland rather than join the PRC. [76]

The opening of the PRC list seemed to give a certain impetus to the undecided about whether to return or not. No.1 Battery, 5 Wilenski Field Artillery Regiment had a total strength of 68 gunners. In April, 1946, seven returned to Poland from Italy just after Bevin's "Keynote". On the 16th September the unit was moved to the UK in preparation for joining the Resettlement Corps. The list for the PRC opened on the 13th January, 1947, and exactly a week before, 25 Poles volunteered to return. [77]

Some of the longer-standing military units did not show these returns en masse but rather a steady trickle over the two years in question. The 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Company of 3 Battalion, 3rd Carpathian Division had an establishment of 166 men; the returns to Poland were:

18th December 1945 :	6
15th January 1946 :	6
18th February 1946 :	3
19th April 1946 :	1
8th October 1946 :	5
1st November 1946 :	11
14th November 1946 :	13
18th November 1946 :	7
26th November 1946 :	14
30th January 1947 :	1
12th February 1947 :	2
====	
69	

A further 14 stayed in Italy to go on to Canada and five stayed in Italy to marry Italians. Even in this unit, although the returns were on-going, the biggest rise in repatriation came in November, 1946, as 45 men decided to leave at that point once the unit had been brought to the UK. [78]

These figures are largely confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw who published the figures for the return to Poland from 1945 to 1949:

	<u>WINTER</u>	<u>SPRING</u>	<u>SUMMER</u>	<u>AUTUMN</u>
1945	--	--	--	12,100
1946	22,500	5,800	3,100	7,000
1947	6,300	25,200	9,200	8,600
1948	3,000	1,600	500 in 2nd ½ of year	
1949	Around 1,000 in the whole year			

The end of 1945 and start of 1946 saw the first flurry of repatriation as those who were going to go went home regardless of events in Poland. Then, even after Bevin's advice in the Spring of 1946, the rush died to a steady flow until the Polish Armed Forces were brought to Britain. As the prospect of joining the PRC loomed ahead of the Poles, so another mass move to

repatriation began in the Spring of 1947 and the soldiers who returned after that were those who became disillusioned with life in the UK. The total figures for return to Poland were:

1945 -	12,100
1946 -	38,400
1947 -	49,300
1948 -	5,100
1949 -	1,000
=====	[79]
	105,900

As of the 1st November, 1947 the total strength of the Polish Army and Navy in the West had been reduced by about a half. Its strength stood at 67,263.

TOTAL: 1/8/1945 -	216,379
Recruited after -	6,914
	=====
	223,293

Repatriated to Poland	-	101,056	
			+
Repatriated to other countries	-	7,172	
			+
Emigrated to third countries	-	14,218	minus
			+
Enlisted in the PRC	-	30,886	
		=====	
		153,332	153,332
			=====
			69,961
			-
	Other Losses	2,698	
		=====	
			67,263

of which: In Great Britain : In Other Areas:

Officers	13,016		654	
Other Ranks	46,983		2,426	
Women's Army	3,852		332	
	-----		-----	
	63,851	+	3,412	= 67,263

[80]

The other major body of Poles who were trying to decide whether to go back to Poland or not was General Pruger-Ketling's 2nd Infantry Division that had spent the war interned in Switzerland. After the collapse of the French Army in 1940, the Division that had been fighting under French command had crossed the Swiss border rather than fall into German hands. In 1945, however, their problem was the same as beset the rest of the Polish military - to return or not?

The Warsaw repatriation authorities took a great deal of interest in the fate of the 2nd Division with its 3,618 men. A report from the 7th November, 1945, found that 1,848 had expressed the desire to go to France to live - many in fact were Poles who had been living in France before 1939. 686 Poles were either on courses in Switzerland or would not be returning to Poland come what may, and some 1,084 would vote to return. Pruger-Ketling had the idea of settling his men as a body in the newly acquired areas of Silesia and, in particular, the town of Kłodzko, formerly German Glatz. Indeed, to that end he established a Temporary Settlement Commission and found 486 men to join him. [81] As well as the soldiers, there were a further 1,700 Polish civilians in Switzerland who also had the same difficult decision to make. A report from Warsaw highlights the situation of these Poles:

"1/ The group of committed opponents to the new order in Poland are not numerous but are well organised and serve the former Government in London. They have at their disposal certain financial resources and have connections in the world of Swiss business. They publish a newspaper - Paszkwil [lampoon] which is presumably subscribed to in Germany and Italy. The group is recruited from amongst the intelligentsia and the pseudo-intelligentsia. Their impact is, however, limited. Their range of activity in this territory is small.

2/ The undecided group is partly being influenced by 'London' propaganda. They will decide to return when the repatriation is organised and when communications with their families are more secure (letters, etc.)

3/ The largest group is those who have decided to return. On the whole this element is very healthy and positive. 97% of the civilians arriving here from Germany before the end of the war, and 60% of the 2nd Infantry Division belong to this group.

4/ The old emigres who in part look favourably on the New Poland have no intention of returning to Poland due to the nature of the economy and to private life." [82]

These 'Swiss' Poles at least had the option of returning to their homes - few came from eastern Poland that was now part of the Soviet Union - but another group of Poles who had had their homes taken away from them were the 'Czech' Poles. After the First World War, the Czechs had overrun the Zaolzie area of Poland with its largely Polish population and, following the Munich agreement in 1938, the Poles re-occupied the area much to the delight of the locals. Poles from the towns of Cieszyn and Frysztat who were in the West were faced with the dilemma of returning to their homes and becoming Czech citizens or resettling in Poland. According to Kuropieska, this problem affected nearly 2,000 troops. The problems were compounded by the poor

relations at the time between the Polish and Czech Governments [83] as each made territorial claim and counter-claim. The Warsaw Government did not help the issue by giving unclear advice to its charges. Polish Foreign Minister Modzelewski, during a visit to London in January, 1946, advised the Zaolzie Poles to put off making a decision about return until the negotiations between the two countries had reached some agreement. Sadly for the soldiers in question, these talks did not provide a solution and in April, 1946, the Polish ambassador in London could "still see no possibility of giving the people of Zaolzie any advice other than staying abroad and awaiting further developments." [84] The biggest problem for the Polish Government was that if the troops decided to settle in Poland - the 'recovered land' in the west was one possible area - then the soldiers' families would also follow, thus depolonising the area. [85] It was not until 1958 that the borders between Poland and Czechoslovakia were formally settled and today the Zaolzie Poles remain a sizeable national minority in the Czech Republic.

Another of the groups who found their future uncertain were the 'Volksdeutsche' - Poles who had been classed by the Germans, to a lesser or greater degree, as their own. When the Germans occupied Poland they compiled a list - the 'Volksliste' - of people who were German or Polish citizens of German descent.

According to a report from Major Gondowicz of Warsaw's Repatriation Mission in Germany to HQ BAOR in November, 1946, there were four classes on the Volksliste:

Class 1 - Full German. These people belonged to pre-war German associations were fully German and had 'Reichsdeutsche' identity cards. These people had no right of repatriation to Poland and had lost their right to citizenship and rehabilitation to Polish society.

Class 2 - 50% German. The Nazis issued blue identity papers to these people who had a "positive attitude" to Germany and the German occupation. These people had lost their Polish citizenship but could re-apply for it after a process of rehabilitation.

Class 3 - German by name, origin or ancestry and holding green identity papers. It was possible for this class to return to Poland and sign a declaration of 'Polishness' - no rehabilitation was needed.

Class 4 - The holders of yellow identity papers could best be described as 'Germanic' rather than German. These were the least trusted by the Nazis.

According to Gondowicz, a return to Poland depended on which class the Volksdeutsche belonged to. He went on: "It should be made clear that enlistment on the 'Volksliste' could take place only on base [sic] of a voluntarily signed application." [86] This, as

Gondowicz probably knew, was not strictly true. Names very often appeared on the Volksliste without the consent of the owner. Very often fear promoted people to sign and often, given the harsh terms of the Nazi occupation, the promise of better conditions was enough incentive for people to sign up.

Franciszek Janikowski was a Pomeranian who had been conscripted to the German Army before joining the Polish 1st Armoured Division. His appearance on the Volksliste was typical:

"My father worked on the railways. He had no land and no fortune so he was afraid. When they took them away in 1942 and asked who doesn't want to be Germanised? Nobody answered. My father signed and, as he told me later, he thought: I have a son and he is going to go to war...." [87]

Ludwik Matuszek from Wielkopolska tells much the same story:

"What can I have against my father? That he was German? We lived in Wielkopolska, we were Polish citizens. The Germans came - father had to quickly become German. Nobody asked if we wanted to or didn't want to. People who live by borders never quite know to whom they belong. One day here, tomorrow there....

That we went to war, what about it? I was called up and I had to go. If I hadn't gone I would have been a deserter and we all know what happens to them." [88]

The propaganda from the 'London' Poles was also directed at these Volksdeutsche Poles to discourage them from returning to Poland. Pamphlets like "The Guide for a Returning Soldier - A Explanation Of The Provisional Government Of National Unity's Declaration About The Treatment Of Soldiers Of The Polish Armed

Forces Returning To Poland" (a pamphlet that the Foreign Office was quick to disclaim as being printed in London by civilians on a commercial basis so not liable to any action on their part [89]) were quick to point out that the Volksdeutsche - even of classes 3 and 4 - were seen in Warsaw as collaborators with the Nazis and their fate could only be imagined. As the warning in the pamphlet states:

"In other words every one of our soldiers who returns to Poland and had the misfortune to belong to the 3rd and 4th group Volksdeutsche through no fault of his own will be at the mercy of the first trouble-maker or person with whom he has an argument and reports him to the secret police that his behaviour during the German occupation was not "compatible with Polish nationality". It is difficult to defend oneself against such an ambiguous and general accusation. What it will result in is the accused being locked up in a concentration camp...." [90]

How Warsaw actually felt about the Volksdeutsche is dealt with later, but the fear of reprisal that was produced by such propaganda could, potentially, have dried up the repatriation of the thousands of men who had previously served in the Wehrmacht. However, the situation produced a major anomaly as the Poles who were the most anxious to return to Poland were these very Volksdeutsche. As already stated, the units that produced the highest rates of return were the units that had been formed toward the end of the war and were manned, predominantly, from the nearly 29,000 men who had been in the German Army.

The propaganda that emanated from both sides of

the Polish political divide after the war did much to formulate attitudes to return among the soldiers, sailors and airmen concerned. Many did not return to Poland - many did. Few of those who went back did not suffer, one way or another, at the hands of a regime that disowned them. Dżennet Skibniewska, a Polish Tartar who served in Italy with the Polish Women's Auxilliary Corps, puts forward a common view that the Poles did not deserve the treatment that they received in Poland:

"Who today from the 'authorities' of the former People's Republic of Poland remembers those years just after the war and the return of those who had lived through its nightmare? For years they had fought for Poland. They dreamed of peaceful work; they were homesick for the land they had not tended for so many years; for their nearest and dearest. When they returned they were met by all manner of trouble. Can those who lie in the Monte Cassino cemetery rest in peace until someone finally realises the tragedy of those days? Personally, I think they should apologise to us. It's the least they can do. To say - we're sorry. One little word - sorry!" [91]

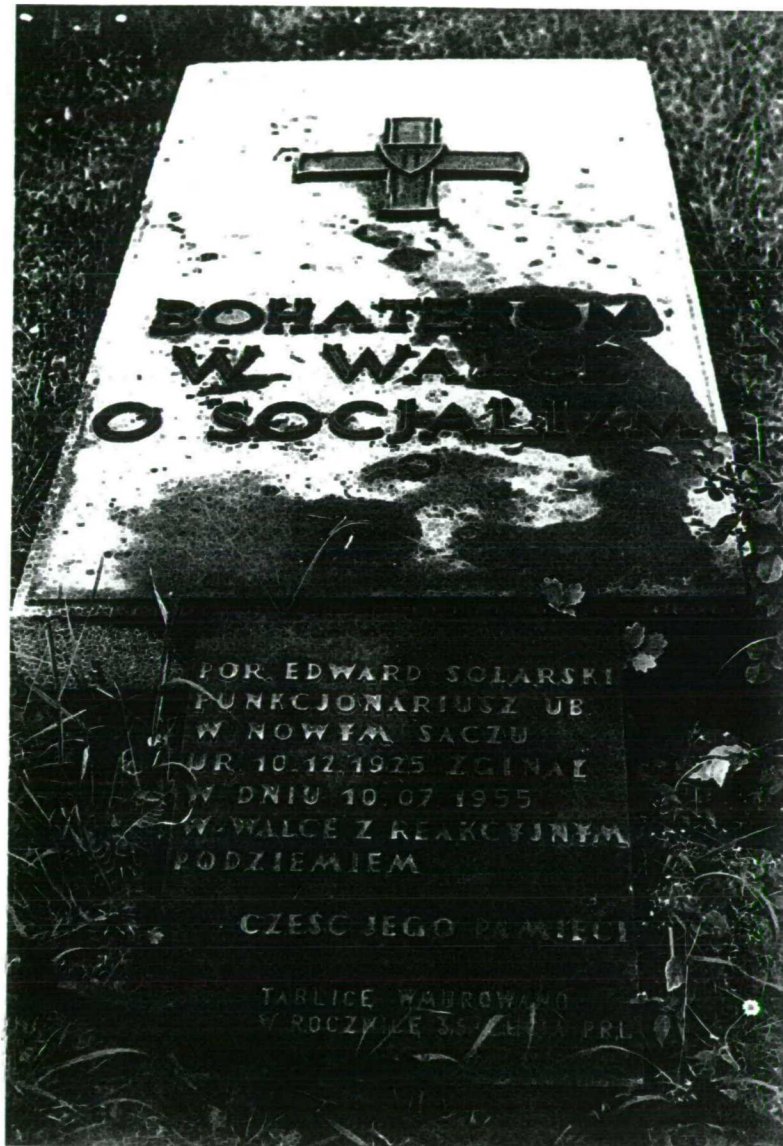
As a postscript to this, Aleksander Kwasniewski, the man who finally closed the Polish United Worker's Party, stood in the Polish Parliament on the 9th November, 1993 and announced:

"I also want to say today - although perhaps it is not up to me to say this - to all those, and some of them are here in this chamber, who experienced wrongs and foulness from the authorities and the system before 1989: We are sorry. [Applause]" [92]

CHAPTER FOUR

"Ojczyznę Wolną, Racz Nam Wrócić Panie."

Conditions In Post-war Poland.



An Officer of the Security Office
"Killed In The Fight Against The
Reactionary Underground."

CHAPTER FOUR

The link between Poland and religion is possibly best expressed in one hymn that invokes God to protect Poland:

Boże coś Polskę przez tak liczne wieki,
Otaczał blaskiem potęgi i chwały,
Coś ją osłaniał tarczą Swej opieki
Od nieszczęść, które przygnębić ją miały:
Przed Twe Ołtarzem zanosim błaganie:
Ojczyznę wolną pobogosław Panie!

God, who for centuries, has given Poland both
Glory and might;
Who has preserved Her with Your sacred shield
From enemies always ready to engulf Her,
To Your altars, Oh God, we bring our fervent prayers,
Bless our free homeland.

[1]

The Polish Forces hymn and prayer book, published in 1942, had one major alteration to the hymn; the last line had been changed from: "Bless our free homeland" to "Give us back our free homeland" - the variant of the hymn adopted as an alternative national anthem under the Russian Partitions of the 19th Century. After the end of the Second World War the Polish Church reverted to the pre-war version - except for a period just prior to, and under, General Jaruzelski's Martial Law when the Church felt itself powerful enough to declare that Poland was not free. In the Church of the exiles the wartime version continued to be used and has

only recently, with the return of democracy to Poland, has the old version been restored. It would appear then that opinion was divided as to whether Poland was free or not. In the case of the hymn the difference was on the grounds of politics. The Church knew that Poland was not free but to preserve its position it was prepared to accept what it had to.

Whereas the Poles knew that Poland had not been liberated by the Red Army, even the Communists who cared to think about such things knew that the Poles were not masters in their own house. The official history of the war, as published by "People's" Poland, did not enter into such polemics over freedom and justice, similarly the Soviet historians were content to expound the idea that all was well in the Soviet bloc. As the "History of the USSR, the Soviet Period" reads:

" In the course of its winter operations the Red Army, together with a Polish Army, liberated Poland from the German occupier and returned to the Polish people the lost land in the West formerly taken by the Germans. On the 21st April, 1945, a twenty year Soviet-Polish treaty was signed about friendship, mutual assistance and post-war co-operation." [2]

The fact that the Communists pushed this line is not so surprising, what is more difficult to accept is how, after the war, many western governments blindly trusted the Soviets and put aside the natural scepticism so necessary in international relations.

The recognition of the Moscow—backed Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw was one act that many of the exiled Poles considered as a betrayal. The French Government of De Gaulle comes in for particular criticism, not simply because it recognised the Communists, (after all most of the other western democracies recognised them) but, according to Tadeusz Modelski, because he was the first. The French recognised the Provisional Government on the 31st December, 1944:

"...six weeks before the Yalta Conference of 4th-11th February, 1945, and 30 weeks before the United States and Britain recognised the Government, and even 5 days before Stalin did. This degrading, servile and unfriendly act of De Gaulle's reckoning for the support of Stalin and the French Communist Party will always be remembered with scorn and aversion by the people of Poland." [3]

Although it was not only the French who were criticised for recognising the Provisional Government on grounds other than strategic. On the 29th May, 1948, "The Economist" launched an attack on the policy of Churchill with regards to the 'Polish problem':

"But a general election was impending in Britain and the Conservative Party wished to demonstrate to the electorate that it was not anti-Soviet and that it had 'solved' the Polish problem. The recognition of the bogus "Government of National Unity" was announced on the very day of the election, though, as it turned out, it did not help Mr Churchill very much." [4]

But this was written at a time when the 'Cold War' was gaining momentum. The Communists in Czechoslovakia had

just taken power and the Berlin Crisis was about to break onto the scene so perceptions towards the Communists were changing. Prior to this, attitudes in many Western countries had been quite positive towards Moscow and its acolytes, yet given the benefits of historical hind-sight it seems unbelievable that experienced and worldly politicians could have been taken in by Moscow.

From 1939 the Poles in the West had been warning the British that the Soviet Union was not to be trusted, and when the Soviet Front swept into Poland from 1944 onwards the Poles had shouted, to anyone who would listen, that the Red Army was not coming as liberator but as conqueror. Again they were ignored and called 'Polish irresponsibles', anti-Soviet and fascists. The questions that must be asked are how justified were the Poles in claiming the conditions in post-war Poland were not to be endured and how justified were the British in dismissing their fears as anti-Soviet propaganda ?

Captain Turowski, the Chief Polish Base Censor of 2 Polcorps, in a report to AFHQ in June, 1945, wrote:

"Nearly in every letter written by an officer or a soldier one can find some sentences expressing their great disenchantment which brought them the end of the war. "The war is over, all are looking to go home, to their sweethearts, mothers or friends, but we Polish Airmen which fought in Battle of Britain and soldiers from Monte Cassino are waiting in dark !" The soldiers realise that

they can't go back to Poland, because a life under unceasing fear of the arrest or deportation would be unbearable. [...]sic]

In general the letters are increasingly pessimistic, full of sorrow and of a bitter disappointment. "There is nothing to do now, a lot of time which rests - makes the situation tragic, we have now plenty of time to discuss and worry about our future. Results: pessimism and the atmosphere of uncertainty and apathy." [5]

This mood of despondency was something that the British had to overcome as best they could. What the British could not overcome was the deep-rooted and endemic hatred of the Soviet Union, not only as a political system but as the successor of an empire that had removed Poland from the map of Europe. As one officer explained, and whose comments were subsequently removed by the Polish Base Censor:

"I am feeling unhappy and sad as I have never been since the Germans invaded Poland in 1939. You certainly will ask why? Because the dirty Bolsheviks have invaded once again our beloved fatherland. They are just now on the outskirts of Warsaw. It means for us that Central and maybe West Europe will be under the Bolshevik domination. It means for us that half of Poland will be occupied and annexed by our eternal foe. It means that the best men of Poland will be killed or deported to the labour camps. It means the annihilation of the Polish nation.... Please remember that my grand-father was deported in 1863 into Siberia and he died there. My father was buried alive by the Bolsheviks in December, 1917. My brother was killed in the battle against them in 1920. And I myself with my family was deported into Russia in 1939 where I lost my wife and daughter. And now will you please ask yourself what would you feel on getting the news that Bolshevik hordes have come again into the heart of Poland." [6]

It was to this type of soldier that Bevin's appeal was directed, but it was against generations of in-bred

anti-Russian feeling that he had to contend.

Polish morale was low and the British knew it. The Resident Minister at AFHQ sent a report to the Foreign Office on June 23rd, 1945 which outlined some of the more obvious criticism coming from the Polish ranks. The apparent submission of the British Government over sixteen Home Army leaders who had been arrested by the Soviets and taken to Moscow for trial was one issue causing dissent among the Poles as was the forthcoming election in Britain - a change of Government could lead to an even worse change of policy. [7]

The Soviet authorities were quick to establish control over Poland and the establishment of a pro-Moscow Government was just the first step to changing the whole political system there. Trying to avoid charges of imperialism, Soviet histories put a slightly different emphasis on events in Poland. Grigory Deborin in "30 Years of Victory" writes:

"The Soviet Government viewed the Polish patriots' aspiration to create their own democratic statehood with understanding and profound approval. It set up no administrative bodies of any kind on Polish territory, but handed over all powers to the people's representative body. This decision was formulated legally in the agreement between the Soviet Government and the Polish Committee of National Liberation on the relations between the Soviet Command and the Polish administration.

[...]

The formation of an executive body in liberated Poland gave rise to an outburst of fury from the Polish Government-in-exile, which was in London

and divorced from the people. It had now become illegal and had finally had the ground cut from underneath its feet.

[...]

These manoeuvres by Polish reaction could not impede the process whereby people's power was established and consolidated in Poland. The Polish Committee of National Liberation confidently led the people towards the goal of creating a strong and independent Poland." [8]

Whereas many Communists and fellow-travellers followed Moscow's line, the Polish exiles could not. According to Jan Ciechanowski, formerly Polish ambassador to the USA, writing in 1948:

"The very composition of the Soviet-sponsored Committee of Liberation clearly showed Stalin's intention. He had placed at the head of this outfit a notorious Communist, an agent of the Comintern, who used the alias 'Bierut'. This agent had for years been a Soviet citizen, though he was of Polish origin. He had always been entirely subservient to Moscow." [9]

While the Communists were becoming firmly established in Poland, Moscow was claiming that it was by the will of the people rather than at the point of a bayonet. The British Government was willing to go along with the fiction, for public consumption at least, in order to maintain Allied unity. As Churchill declared to the Commons on 15th December, 1944:

"...the fate of the Polish nation holds a prime place in the thoughts and policies of His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament. It was with great pleasure that I heard from Marshal Stalin that he, too, was resolved upon the creation and maintenance of a strong, integral, independent Poland as one of the leading Powers in Europe. He has several times repeated these declarations in public, and I am convinced that they represent the settled policy of the Soviet Union." [10]

Churchill's public confidence in Stalin's word was not shared by all the British in senior positions. As Sir John Slessor, the Mediterranean Air Commander whose planes flew to relieve the Warsaw Rising with a horrendous loss rate, explained:

"How, after the fall of Warsaw, any responsible statesman could trust any Russian Communist further than he could kick him, passes the comprehension of ordinary men." [11]

Although many Poles feared the worst about life in Poland under the new regime, some were prepared to take them at face value and see what conditions were like. Karol Popiel, himself a repatriate, explains the spirit of self sacrifice that led some Poles to return:

" The regime holds out its hand for co-operation and mutual coexistence. Somebody, despite their doubts, has to find out if it's being honest. Someone has to put their head on the block and, if there is treachery, show the world that it is a deception. We returned, we took up the challenge, we lost. [...]

Nearly everyone went to prison but the country was clear that the Christian leadership was not shooting from the other side of the fence but were there in person...." [12]

The idea that conditions in Poland could only be changed from within was taken up by the Polish Peasant Party [PSL] under its leader Stanisław Mikołajczyk. The 1945 New Year edition of the PSL paper "Jutro Polski" explained why the Party was returning to Poland:

"We fight for the spirit of the nation, for its ideals and values, for the economic reconstruction of the country, for the development of the economy and of culture. We want to lead that struggle in Poland, where our place and destiny is." [13]

Whereas Mikołajczyk considered his duty was in Poland, others in the exile camp, Anders in particular, considered him and the PSL leadership as no less than traitors. The newspaper of the 5th Kresowa Division, the "Wiadomości Kresowe", virtually called Mikołajczyk a traitor in an article titled "The Black Roll of the Polish Quisling":

"...Mikołajczyk - together with his associates will one day stand before a tribunal in a free Poland to face just punishment for his guilt which stems from his false ambition, his petty character, his lack of scruples and his servility.

No one can convince us that such an agent of others' interests is a 'defender of a really independent Poland'. Mikołajczyk's professed 'opposition' is, in reality, a smoke-screen to hide the final blood-letting of the living organism that is Independent Poland, and of which we are an organ." [14]

Churchill had convinced Mikołajczyk that he had to return to Poland to play his part in the Provisional Government 'for the good of Poland' and many people in Poland read a great deal into this supposed support. Stefan Korboński wrote in his dairy on the 30th July, 1945:

"...all these people believe that Mikołajczyk has come with the approval of the British and American governments, bringing a recipe for relieving Poland of its eastern guests." [15]

In November Korboński wrote of Mikołajczyk that his...

"...popularity is based on the fact that, as every child knows, he has returned with the approval of the British and American governments in order to liberate Poland in accordance with the plan he has drawn up with them. The Communists laugh at this

but let them laugh, everyone thinks. "He laughs best who laughs last". Surely Mikolajczyk wouldn't be so stupid as to come on his own with nothing at all." [16]

The sad fact was that Mikołajczyk did return to Poland with nothing more than a vague promise of support from Churchill and no word of what would happen if things went wrong and the plan fell to pieces. The PSL thought they were doing their best for the country but before Mikołajczyk left Britain, Anders made one final attempt to convince him not to go and to preserve the unity of the Polish exiles. Anders, in his memoirs, recounts his conversation with the PSL leader:

Anders: "I should like to express my conviction that you are not only committing a grave error, but that you are also acting to the detriment of Poland. [...] You have too great a political standing to endorse, by your consent, this new partition of Poland. Our generation and those to come will curse you for that. World public opinion will be misled, if only by Soviet propaganda, into thinking that everything that has happened has been in agreement with the Poles. [...] You will have no influence on the course of events in Poland; on the contrary, you will be gradually eliminated. The decisions of Yalta are a crime against the Polish nation. And we Poles - that means you also - cannot be party to them".

Mikołajczyk: "You are wrong, General. I am deeply convinced that I shall contribute to Poland's retaining her independence. [...] I consider that Stalin is interested in having a strong Poland, and he has told me so more than once. I am sure that the elections will prove the great support I have in Poland. After these elections a democratic government will be established there."

Anders: "You deceive yourself about the elections.... I have no doubt that you would have not only the support of the men of your party, but also of all decent Poles, simply because they would like to

show their real attitudes towards Soviet Russia. That is why I am convinced that the elections will be faked, just as they were faked in our eastern territories in 1939. [...] I am afraid that within three months of the falsified elections, you may find yourself in prison, even in my former cell at Lubianka, where you will be detained as a traitor to the nation and a spy. What is worse, I am certain you would then confess it yourself." [17]

This was a remarkable piece of prognostication; the election in Poland was held on January 19th, 1947, and exactly eight months later Mikołajczyk was fleeing for his life. Admittedly Anders' book was written ex post facto in 1949 but the general line is indicative of the polemic that was raging among the Poles at the time. Anders' idea was that if any prominent Pole was seen to be accepting the terms of Yalta then it would be seen by the outside world that all the Poles went along with them.

Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, one of the couriers between the Polish Government in London and the "Home Army" [AK] in Poland, in a conversation with Michael Charlton maintained the rightness of the exile course in not accepting the post-war settlement:

"I feel they were right not to do it. The problem was (and this was said - if I remember - by Raczynski to Eden) that if we really accept the kind of concession you try to impose on us, the union of the Polish nation will be ruined. This 'Union Sacrée', he used this word, will be destroyed. All right, the cause was lost, the war was lost - but we have to think in terms of the future and to preserve unity. And this unity was preserved." [18]

As the PSL's role as the 'official opposition' disintegrated, Warsaw's Ministry of Information and Propaganda noted a mood of despondency sweeping one time supporters. According to many, the PSL had made a mistake in committing themselves to working with the Provisional Government and they should have foreseen the hopelessness of their position. In many respects General Anders had had a more realistic view as he refused to collaborate. [19]

Although the Poles, with certain notable exceptions, opposed Yalta and everything it stood for, the matter was not really in Polish hands. The future of Poland was very much wrapped up in 'great power' politics and the question of how far the British and US Governments were prepared to go in promoting what appeared to be an injustice. As it turned out they were prepared to go a long way and, in order to justify a breach of the Atlantic Charter, political expediency had to be claimed. For Stalin this was good news as he could have a free hand in central and eastern Europe.

As Jan Nowak continues:

"The Poles were asking, 'If you cannot do anything for us, please do not do anything against us; do not weaken our position. At least do not say openly that there will be no resistance, no conflict over Poland.'

I read the document where Bierut, the Polish Communist leader, asked Stalin, 'Will there be any conflict over Poland with the West?' and Stalin says there will be no conflict whatsoever. He just dismissed the idea. You know this is what the

Anglo-Saxons did: they really offered, in advance, an assurance that 'there will be no resistance over the Polish issue.'" [20]

Churchill, of course, was aware of the nature of the Soviet Union but also how history would judge his dealings with it. In a telegram to Smuts he wrote:

"Will it be said of me that I was so obsessed with the destruction of Hitlerism that I neglected to see the enemy rising in the East? Will this somehow be my epitaph on everything that I have done from the Blitz, the Battle of Britain and onwards?" [21]

This particular burst of self-doubt came about as a result of the Katyń graves disclosure in 1943. Yet Churchill continued to be aware of the public's reaction to his dealings with Moscow. In his memoirs Churchill recounts that he explained to Stalin just why he would not be recognising the Provisional Government in Poland:

"It would be said that His Majesty's Government have given way completely on the eastern frontier (as in fact we have) and have accepted and championed the Soviet view. It would also be said that we have broken altogether with the lawful Government of Poland, which we have recognised for these five years of war and that we have no knowledge of what is actually going on in Poland. We cannot see and hear what opinion is. It would be said we can only accept what the Lublin Government proclaims about the opinions of the Polish people, and His Majesty's Government would be charged in Parliament with having altogether forsaken the cause of Poland." [22]

Churchill informed Stalin of his position here on the 8th February, 1945, yet five months later conditions must have improved to such an extent that Churchill

felt himself able to do what he said he would not do and recognise the 'Lublin' Poles. In truth, conditions, if anything, deteriorated in Poland but recognition went on ahead regardless. The fact was that for all the concerned words of the western politicians it was not really their problem. Churchill, at Teheran, said that the Poles would be wise to take his advice but that he "...was not prepared to make a great squawk about Lvov." [23] Giving up Poland's eastern territory did not prove too difficult for Churchill, after all, as he told Capt. Count Lubomirski, ADC and translator to Anders: "I really don't understand why the Poles make such a fuss about those Pripet Marshes - nothing but mud." [24] But it was not Churchill's Lwów and they were not Churchill's Pripet Marshes.

A telling comment on Churchill's attitude to the post-war world came in 1943 as the Prime Minister talked to one of the British Liaison Officers in Yugoslavia. Brigadier Fitzroy Maclean recounts:

"Do you intend," he asked, "to make Yugoslavia your home after the war?"

"No, Sir," I replied.

"Neither do I," he said. "And that being so, the less you and I worry about the form of Government they set up, the better. That is for them to decide." [25]

For the Poles the question of the eastern lands was a dilemma of some difficulty. The London

Arciszewski Government knew that, barring a miracle, the 'Kresy' were lost but the 'Big Three' were offering parts of Germany as compensation. On political and moral grounds the Poles refused to accept the loss in the east but at the same time knew that if Poland was to survive the future then she needed the industrial land in the west - the Poles could not have one without the other. If the west was accepted as compensation then they would have to accept the east was gone.

Zygmunt Nowakowski, writing an article in 1947 in "Wiadomości" put a slightly different emphasis on the compensation issue:

"The gains in the west are just in their entirety as only part compensation, but not for Lwów or for Wilno, but rather for the terrible German crimes to which Poland has been victim. These acquisitions are a matter of justice. We deserve them to redress the wrong that the Germans have done Poland, even though it will not put them right." [26]

Poles of many political complexions pressed the claim for German territory, and for as much of it as they could get their hands on but like so many other issues of the time the matter was largely out of Polish hands. Whatever parts of Germany that would be ceded by the Germans would be won by the Red Army and given by the good will of Moscow.

Churchill was insistent that Poland's western border should run down the rivers Oder and Eastern Neisse (Nysa Kłodzka), while Stalin, the Poles in

Warsaw and the Poles in London preferred the Western Neisse (Nysa Łużycka). Churchill's plan would have left Zielona Góra, Legnica, Wałbrzych and Lower Silesia to Germany. For the Poles it appeared that Churchill was siding with the Germans against their interests and it appears that, according to Churchill's own memoirs, he was prepared to take this issue as far as it needed to go in order to keep the area German.

"For instance, neither I nor Mr. Eden would ever have agreed to the Western Neisse being the frontier line. The line of the Oder and the Eastern Neisse had already been recognised as the Polish compensation for retiring to the Curzon Line, but the overrunning by the Russian armies of the territory up to and even beyond the Western Neisse was never and would never have been agreed to by any Government of which I was the head."
[27]

Not only was Churchill willing to disagree with Stalin, he was also ready to break up Potsdam and....:

"...namely, to have a show-down at the end of the Conference, and, if necessary, to have a public break rather than allow anything beyond the Oder and the Eastern Neisse to be ceded to Poland."
[28]

It could be argued that it was unfortunate that Churchill did not employ the same level of commitment to protecting the Poles from the Soviet Union as he did protecting the Germans from the Poles. Churchill, during his famous "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri, complained about "Slav penetration deep into German territory" and the US Secretary of State, James

Byrnes, in a speech in Stuttgart, told his audience that the Polish western frontier was not necessarily permanent. This fell right into the hands of the Soviet propaganda machine. A great deal of effort was put into convincing the Poles, with some success and justification, that both the British and the US were unreliable as Allies. German 'revanchism' would only be countered by the Soviet Union. As Gomułka put it:

"If ever in the future the Germans should again fall upon Poland, without the Soviet Union's help, without a Soviet Polish alliance, we should be threatened with the same fate we suffered in September 1939." [29]

As Bethell writes in his biography of Gomułka, Churchill was largely seen to be responsible for handing over eastern Poland to Moscow and now he wanted to take away the Poles' one consolation; this was bitterly resented by the Poles, and no doubt many were glad that he did not win the 1945 election and so be in a position to have his final 'show-down' at Potsdam. Despite what Churchill said he might have done, the fact was that when he had the opportunity he did not oppose Stalin to any valuable degree. The opportunity was then taken away from him by the electorate of Britain and handed to Attlee - he too would not defy the Soviets and so, to quote Bethell's conclusion:

"Great Britain, war weary and immersed in a general election, wanted to wash her hands of the 'Polish imbroglio'. The idea of a crisis with the Soviet Union, much less a war, was intolerable. Anything was better than that. So Britain gave up her 'matter of honour' and broke her word towards the Poles, just as she had done in 1939." [30]

But even at this stage the exiled Poles were still being criticised in many quarters for not meekly accepting the will of the 'great powers' and protesting an injustice. If only, some argued, the Poles would behave like the Czechs and accept the situation as it was. In 1947 G.D.H. Cole wrote his "Intelligent Man's Guide to the Post-War World" in which he asserted:

"President Benes saw, at an early stage, that the best hope for the re-establishment of a free Czechoslovakia lay in coming to terms with the Soviet Union, and thus making it possible for the exiled Government to return and to re-shape the country's institutions without the same sharp break with the past as befell the Poles because of the foolish intransigence of the Polish Government in London." [31]

In March of the following year, 1948, the Communists staged a coup in Prague that led to the resignation of the 12 centre and right-wing ministers in the Government. The last hope of the anti-Communists, the Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, was found dead on March 10th after having 'fallen' from his office window - it still remains unclear whether he committed suicide or if he was disposed of by the Communists.

The Czechs had gone along with the Communists in the hope that, given public support, they would win.

Whereas most Poles could see the folly of such an approach, others took up the challenge - even though with hind-sight it is now clear just how pitiful were their chances. In a conversation with W.D.Allen of the Foreign Office Mikołajczyk described events in Poland as a battle:

"The battle for Poland's independence was now joined. In commenting upon the attitudes of Poles abroad he said rather grimly that this was now a fight and where there was fighting people were apt to get hurt or even killed. Patriotic Poles should, however, accept this risk." [32]

Mikołajczyk, who was here insinuating that he was more patriotic than those generals who refused to return to Poland, agreed to go back and give credibility to that which had been agreed at Yalta and Potsdam. The Final communiqué from Potsdam, signed on August 2nd, 1945, laid down the fine aspirations to which the Polish Provisional Government were meant to aspire:

"The three Powers are anxious to assist the Polish Provisional Government in facilitating the return to Poland as soon as practicable of all Poles abroad who wish to go, including members of the Polish Armed Forces and the Merchant Marine. They expect that those Poles who return home shall be accorded personal and property rights on the same basis as all Polish citizens.

The three Powers note that the Polish Provisional Government in accordance with the decisions of the Crimea Conference has agreed to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot in which all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take

part and to put forward candidates and that representatives of the Allied press shall enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Poland before and during the elections." [33]

Laudable as these words were, they did not convince everyone. Obviously many of the Poles in the West retained their natural scepticism over any document signed by Stalin, but there were also many in British politics, mostly Conservatives now relegated to the Opposition, who could also see just how unlikely the aspirations were to come about. Potsdam was, on the whole, a reaffirmation of the Yalta Accord and the debate over that agreement brought out the divisions in British attitudes. One Conservative, Major Lord Willoughby de Evesby, who was prepared to stand against his Government and abstain in the vote, said in the Commons:

"'...democratic principles... democratic means... democratic elements... broader democratic basis... free and unfettered elections', and so on. It would be disappointing and to my mind disastrous, after the long journeys which the Prime Minister undertook to get to the Crimea and all the hard work that was done, if we found that he, the President of the United States and Marshal Stalin were not all speaking exactly the same language. In fact, a slightly different definition was given to this word by all three of them." [34]

Certainly Stalin's interpretation of democracy was considered that which was politically expedient at the time. Alger Hiss, assistant to the US Secretary of State, recounts that at the Teheran meeting in 1943 President Roosevelt had told Stalin that many

Americans viewed the Soviet annexation of the Baltic States with some anxiety and asked that in order to placate this disturbed feeling might it be possible to hold some plebiscite to legitimize events. Stalin was supposed to have "very casually" said: "You want a plebiscite? Of course!" [35] Such was the view of Stalin towards 'free and unfettered' elections. The results were never in doubt; they were falsified in the Baltic States, they were falsified in 1939 when the Soviets had occupied Eastern Poland under the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and it seemed likely that they would again be falsified in Poland whenever the Provisional Government got around to holding them. The British and US Governments appeared to have more faith in Stalin and the Polish Communists than did many Poles in Poland. The Ministry of Information and Propaganda in Warsaw recorded a popular joke that was circulating in the country just before the January, 1947, election that said there would be no winter in 1946 as the "lipa" would be in bloom in January - the "lipa" in Polish is a lime-tree and is also the word for a lie or an untrue story. [36]

Bierut, who met Churchill in July, 1945, tried his best to put forward the idea that Poland would emerge from the shadow of the war as a freer and more democratic state. He told Churchill that he did not want to stop

the Polish people expressing their views and that the elections in Poland would be "even more democratic than English ones, and home politics would develop more and more harmoniously." [37]

Eight months after Bierut had met Churchill the elections had still not taken place. The reluctance of the Provisional Government to put itself to the public vote began to ring alarm bells in Whitehall. The Labour Foreign Minister Bevin declared to Parliament that Britain would use its influence to make sure the Poles observed the Yalta declaration; this in turn led to an angry note of protest from Bevin's equivalent in Warsaw Wincenty Rzymowski with the accusation that Bevin was meddling in Polish internal affairs.

In Boruta-Spiechowicz's secret meeting with the Foreign Office he spoke of what might happen in the Polish elections if all things were left to run their natural course:

"Boruta considers that in free elections Mikolaiczuk [sic] would have not less than 80% and probably as much as 90% of the votes. The peasants themselves are strong and fearless and would vote up to 99% for the Peasant Party. If elections were held today Mikolaiczuk might get 70% in spite of the efforts of the present regime to arrange for the 'cooking' of the elections. The present regime is very concerned and much of its energy is devoted to securing an overwhelming vote for its own block." [38]

There was a great deal of underestimation in the

capacity of the Communists to so 'cook'. Dr S. Taylor MP, in a report to Hector McNeil on his recent visit to Poland, expresses the view that was common at the time, that the Communist Party, or to give it its correct title of Polish Workers Party [PPR], was actually worried about the election and that the outcome was anything but a forgone conclusion.

"Strangely enough they are far less frightened of a free election than PPS [Polish Socialist Party]. This may be because they have overestimated support for the left parties, because they intend to cook the elections, because they intend to fight if they lose, or because they realise that a free election, by splitting PPS, would favour them in the long run. My guess is 1 and 4. I doubt if they could cook on a sufficient scale." [39]

Cavendish-Bentinck, who had also read Dr Taylor's report contradicted his findings:

"I think that the reason for which the P.P.R. are less frightened of a free election than the leaders of the P.P.S. is that they are quite determined that there will be no free elections, and that whatever happens they will somehow or other manage to stay in power." [40]

This was a more realistic scenario than that presented by Dr Taylor. So much emphasis had been placed by the 'Big Three' on the Polish elections but very few British politicians by the beginning of 1946, and even fewer in the Foreign Office, believed that the elections would be anything but a sham; at best they would not be 'free and unfettered'.

The Foreign Office received a report of a conversation between Mr Bourdillon Ford and Jerzy

Szapiro, a Polish Socialist. Szapiro advocated putting off the election until August, 1947. This would give the country a chance to settle down - if the political violence continued, said Szapiro, then the Soviet Army might take control of Poland. By August of 1947 "You could have a election that would be fought on the true issues." [41] This drew an untypical minute from Hankey at the FO: "Crap !!" Clearly the Head of the Northern Department remained unconvinced by Szapiro's argument. Whereas he agreed that the PPS would be the middle ground between the PPR and the PSL, Hankey was of the opinion that if elections were not held soon then there would be no PSL left, such was the campaign of repression used by the Communist security apparatus.

The elections in Poland, if the Provisional Government ever agreed to hold them, would be unsupervised by the rest of the world, despite the provisions made in the Yalta terms. This would inevitably lead to accusations of electoral abuse but the British had no plans to send monitors. The Earl of Craven brought that very point to the attention of the Government in the House of Lords on the 19th March, 1946. If the Government were sending a Commission to supervise the elections in Greece why were they not sending one to Poland? Lord Ammon, replying for the Government, declared that:

"The Polish President further assured the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Potsdam that the elections would be held on the basis of the 1921 Polish Constitution. If these pledges are strictly fulfilled in the arrangements made for the elections, an international Commission would not appear necessary." [42]

This begs the question; what would happen if these pledges were not strictly fulfilled? It was widely believed at the time that they would not be. By giving up the demand for international supervision the Western Powers were giving the Communists a free hand to hold the election on their terms. This, of course, did not deter the British Government from its policy of trying to convince the Polish Armed Forces under its command to return to Poland. Not only were the Poles told that it was their patriotic duty to return but also they were told that if enough of them went back then they would make a substantial difference to the outcome of the election. The Poles pointed out the loophole in this logic that whether they returned or not the Communists would retain power in Poland by fixing the election. As Anders was later to write:

"The British decision had indeed surprised us, for it had always been my impression that no decision would be taken in regard to the Polish Forces until after elections had been held in the country. Mr Bevin, however, said that the British view had always been that the troops should return to take part in the elections. He seemed to think that their votes would really count and that by returning they would help in the attainment of Polish freedom." [43]

Anders was not alone in this view. In the FO's first

"Warsaw Weekly Summary" for 1947 Cavendish-Bentinck, the British ambassador, confirmed the Foreign Office's worst fears:

"It is now clear that as a result of pre-election activities staged by the Communist Party there is no chance of the elections being anything but a farce." [44]

The world had a foretaste of Communist election fraud in July of 1946 during the, so-called, "3 Times Yes" Referendum. As officially announced the result to the three questions asked were:

1/ Are you in favour of abolishing the Senate?

Yes: 7,844,522 (66.2%)
No : 3,686,029 (33.8%)

2/ Are you for making permanent, through the future Constitution, the economic system instituted by the land-reform and nationalisation of the basic industries with maintenance of the rights of private enterprise?

Yes: 8,896,105 (77.3%)
No : 2,634,446 (22.7%)

3/ Are you for the Polish western frontiers as fixed on the Baltic and on the Oder and Neisse?

Yes: 10,534,697 (94.2%)
No : 995,854 (5.8%) [45]

The Communists campaigned for a show of support from the public that they should vote '3 x Yes', and that is what they announced the public had done. This did not convince many people. The PSL complained bitterly that the results were a fraud but due to censorship and Communist control over the means to broadcast to the

public the truth could not easily be told.

The true results in some districts did become known to the PSL. A total of 2,805 electoral districts did manage to announce their real voting figures to independent sources before the Provisional Government could falsify them.

Mikołajczyk cites one example in his book "The Rape of Poland" - The official results to question 1, in the Kraków area, were: Yes 68% No 32% but the real results, according to the PSL, were: Yes 16.46% No 83.54% [46]

The results of the national elections were even worse. The PSL was offered membership of the Government bloc or political and physical annihilation. The PSL decided to call in its support from the mass of the Polish people and stand alone. All the estimates of PSL popularity were accurate and in a free election they would have undoubtedly won so the 'official' results when they were announced did not convince anyone. [47]

<u>Party</u>	<u>Valid Votes</u>	<u>% of vote</u>	<u>Representatives</u>
Government Bloc	9,003,684	80.1	384
PSL	1,154,847	10.3	28
Labour Party	530,979	4.7	15
PSL (New Liberation)	379,754	3.5	13
Others	157,611	1.4	4
	-----	-----	---
	11,244,875	100.0	444

Mikołajczyk and the PSL passed into political oblivion just as Anders and other Poles had said they would. Their obliteration was complete and with them died any hope of democracy in Poland.

The British Government was forced to concede that things had not gone according to plan. On February 3rd, 1947, the Under-secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Mayhew, told the Commons:

"Our information regarding the conduct of the Polish elections, unfortunately, confirms reports from reliable British Press correspondents, which have already been published. The powers of the Polish Provisional Government were extensively used to reduce to a minimum the vote of those opposed to the Government bloc. Opposition lists of candidates in areas covering 22 per cent. of the electorate were completely suppressed. Candidates and voters' names were removed from the lists; candidates were arrested; Government officials, members of the Armed Forces and many others were made to vote openly, and other forms of intimidation and pressure were used. The count was conducted in conditions entirely controlled by the Government bloc. His Majesty's Government cannot regard these elections as fulfilling the solemn contract which the Polish Provisional Government entered into with them and with the United States Government and Soviet Government that free and unfettered elections would be held. They cannot, therefore, regard the results as a true expression of the will of the Polish people."
[48]

This was very much a case of closing the stable door after the horse had bolted. The Poles in the West had warned that the elections would not be free, the PSL by standing in the elections had given them a credibility that they did not deserve, and when everything had

fallen apart there was very little that anyone could do about it - the damage had already been done.

Back in July, 1945, when recognition had been transferred from the London Poles to the Warsaw Polish Government, Count Raczyński, the exiled Foreign Minister, wrote to his British counterpart, Anthony Eden, to protest the move:

"3: The persecution which thousands of Poles are enduring in Poland today, and which afflict with particular severity all those citizens of the Republic who have actively demonstrated their devotion to the cause of freedom and independence by their implacable struggle against the German invader, prove beyond any doubt that the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity in no way represents the will of the nation, but constitutes a subservient body imposed on Poland by force from without.

4: The first attribute of the independence of a State is its freedom to choose a Government. In the present circumstances, the source of the authority of the Government headed by M Osobka-Morawski is a decision made not by the Polish nation but by three foreign powers, one of which controls de facto the whole administration of Poland through its army and police force. The legal basis of the authority of that Government can be compared with the legal basis of the authority of the so-called Governments set up in occupied countries during the war by Germany. In both cases they are based on the will of a foreign power." [49]

For the Poles there was no sense of satisfaction at being able to sit back and say - we told you so! The feeling of national disaster was all pervading and the knowledge that it was too late to do anything about it did not help. The Poles had pleaded with the British not to recognise the Polish Government in Warsaw until after the elections, then a better idea of what the

Provisional Government thought about 'free and unfettered' elections would be known. Britain and the United States had declared themselves publicly to be committed to democracy in Poland; Anthony Eden, in his contribution to the Yalta debate, declared:

"First, is it our desire that Poland should be really and truly free? Yes, certainly, most certainly it is. In examining that Government, if and when it is brought together, it will be for us and our Allies to decide whether that Government is really and truly, as far as we can judge, representative of the Polish people. Our recognition must depend on that. We would not recognise a Government which we did not think representative. The addition of one or two Ministers would not meet our views. It must be, or as far as it can be made, representative of the Polish parties as they are known, and include representative national Polish figures. That is what we mean." [50]

President Truman, in a speech made on Navy Day, October 27th, 1945, echoed Eden:

"We shall refuse to recognise any government imposed on any nation by the force of any foreign power. In some cases it may be impossible to prevent forceful imposition of such a government. But the United States will not recognise any such government." [51]

Despite such pious platitudes to freedom and to national self determination, the fact was that, to paraphrase the then US ambassador to Warsaw, the betrayal had been legalized.

The options for action by the British and US Governments were limited. The first reaction was to break off diplomatic relations with Poland and to deny that recognition already given. Arthur Bliss Lane, the US ambassador in Warsaw, forwarded a note from

Cardinal Hlond to Washington on February 3rd, 1947, in which the Primate of Poland said that the withdrawal of foreign embassies would mean the end of the Polish people and would end Poland's long association with the western world. [52] The removal of recognition would not change anything. Poland would not become any more democratic as a result, the move would not hurt the Government - if anything the move would push Poland further towards the Soviet Camp - and the only ones who would suffer would be the Polish people.

Bliss Lane was so at odds with his Government's policy towards Poland that he felt obliged to resign his position. In his resignation letter of 21st March, 1947, he wrote to President Truman:

"As you know, these elections were not 'free and unfettered' as the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity had previously pledged, in keeping with the Yalta and Potsdam agreements. Quite the contrary, the pre-election period was characterised by coercion, intimidation and violence - thus rendering the election a farce and indicating on the part of the Polish Government a cynical disregard of its international obligations.

Under the circumstances I feel that I can do far more for the cause of the relations between the peoples of the United States and Poland if I should revert to the status of a private citizen and thus be enabled to speak and write openly, without being hampered by diplomatic convention, regarding the present tragedy of Poland." [53]

Protesting was all that was left with regards to Poland. At the first sitting of the Sejm, the Polish Parliament, on the 4th February, 1947, there was a sharp protest from the PSL:

"From the side of the PSL every effort was made to ensure the elections were clean and that they could be carried out peacefully. The responsibility for breaking the commitments given to the nation that the elections would be 'free and unfettered' lies solely with the parties.

We have protested against all aspects of the election and are aiming to have the election declared as invalid across the whole country."
[54]

This last comment, according to the stenographic record, led to "merriment" in the chamber. The 'victors' in the election did not take such words seriously, after all they, like Stalin, knew that there would be no conflict over Poland. The West would do nothing and the PSL were already on the political sidelines. However, for public consumption the Communists maintained the fiction that the elections had been a true expression of the people's will. The verbatim record of the 19th Sitting on 23rd June, 1947, records one Bloc delegate:

"Every word of Delegate Mikołajczyk brings a stream of fury on account of losing the election. The last election held in Poland was free from reactionary pressure and that is why the result was as it was and no other. (Applause. Delegate Mikołajczyk: But it was not free from the pressure of rifles. Voice from the PSL benches: nor was it free from UB [Security Office] pressure) The elections were carried out in accordance with the principles of fair voting." [55]

Another delegate during the next day's sitting continued:

"The nation, in voting against you [the PSL] were voting against Anders, Komorowski, Sosnkowski and Mikołajczyk, they were voting against another twenty years Government of Endecja, Sanacja and Piast Party politics. That is why it is the people who are the victors of the elections." [56]

The historians of "People's" Poland also turned this blatant lie into an official truth. According to Józef Szaflik's "Historia Polski" the election would prove whether the voters would choose social and economic reform or whether they would be "lured by the demagogue slogans of the PSL, based as they were on the support of reactionaries." [57] The fiction was maintained by the Communists as it added legitimacy to their authority: historians in the West preferred to see the Provisional Government and the elections in Poland for what they were:

"Soviet support was necessary in this case to allow the Communists to hold onto positions they had already won. It can be asserted that in Poland the breakup of the coalition in 1947 was already guaranteed in 1945 and the coalition itself was never anything but a trick." [58]

For the Polish Armed Forces in the West who were desperately watching events unfold in Poland the prospect of return seemed more and more remote. Those who were concerned with the eventual repatriation of the Poles favoured a more optimistic view on the situation.

Cavendish-Bentinck, in a secret cipher to the Foreign Office of 14th January, 1946, discussed his conversation with Mikołajczyk who had said that probably 80% of Anders' troops and a similar number from Germany and the UK would return to Poland in the Spring of 1946. According to Mikołajczyk the Officer

Corps had....:

"...overreached themselves in the propaganda against returning, and that a number of men from these forces who had visited this country have returned with reports showing that whilst conditions are far from satisfactory they are not as bad as has been depicted." [59]

From Mikołajczyk's various declarations and conversations before his return to Poland and then prior to the election it would appear that he spent much of his time trying to play down events in Poland and to present a picture that was decidedly unrealistic. In November of 1945 the Foreign Office sent a report of one of Mikołajczyk's conversations that, no doubt, he went on to regret.

"M. Mikolajczyk said that the country was settling down and he alleged as proof of this that 95% of the Underground Army had emerged from the Maquis, and that casualties in the operations against the underground army which had at one time, I understand him to say, reached the enormous figure of 15,000 a month on each side had ceased. The battle for political freedom was being won. The Communists were no longer able to put down the other political parties except by force, which. they would now hesitate to use. [...]

M. Mikolajczyk said that the withdrawal of Russian troops was going fairly well and he thought that the majority of what he called field units had departed or were departing. Leaving only administrative, supply and L. of C. [lines of communication] personnel. [...] He regarded the recent arrangements for stationing a special Russian force in each area of Poland to mop up Red Army stragglers and looters as valuable and deplored its having been represented in some quarters as a new Russian occupation." [60]

It is little wonder that the British dismissed the fears and warnings of people like Anders as so much anti-Soviet propaganda when such an internationally

respected politician as Mikołajczyk was sending contradictory and misleading messages that things in Poland were not as bad as some made out.

Much was made at the time of Poles being shipped out to Soviet prisons, but again, this could be played down as scaremongering. Professor Douglas Savory, the Ulster Unionist MP for Belfast University who did so much to increase awareness of the Polish cause, was equally dismissed when he broached the matter in the Commons. Savory argued that since 40% of the Polish Armed Forces had escaped from Soviet camps once before it seemed highly unlikely that they would return to Poland under the conditions that prevailed at the time. The Government spokesman, as reported in "The Times", responded:

"In regard to concentration camps, I know the hon. gentleman comes from a sister Island which is in the habit of looking backwards. (Laughter) May I suggest that we all look forward in this problem ? (Cheers)." [61]

General Anders, the bête noire of the Foreign Office, in an interview with "The Times" of October 23rd, 1946, stated that many of the Polish troops who had volunteered for return had also ended up in Soviet concentration camps. Hankey's letter from the Foreign Office to Brig. Pyman at the War Office expresses the real reason why talk of prisons should be played down:

"I believe it is true that some of the men of the Polish Second Corps have got into concentration camps in Poland and it is also true that the Russians control the security police. All the same I do not believe any have got into specifically Russian concentration camps in Poland (if there are any) or that any have found their way into Russian concentration camps in Russia.

Might we ask you to telegraph to Italy and ask General Anders for his evidence. If it is true that these chaps are being sent to Russian concentration camps then we should be glad to know that it is so. If there is no evidence of that, however, then I do think we should discourage Polish Generals under our command from making statements which are calculated to cause alarm and despondency among those who wish to return." [62]

By causing 'alarm and despondency' among possible repatriates the flow back to Poland might dry up altogether, the last thing that the Government wanted. Every effort had to be made to get the Poles to go back to Poland and talk of concentration camps did not help.

During the Foreign Affairs debate on the 22nd November, 1945, one MP who had just returned from a visit to Poland declared:

"I am authorised to say from the President of Poland that those Poles in the Polish Army in this country who return, will not only be given full civic rights but that no recrimination, in any shape or form, will be visited upon them because of anything they may have done in the past." [63]

These fine words, largely for the consumption of the Poles, were not matched by the deeds of the Warsaw authorities.

A report from Major Irwin, a War Office representative who had been attached to repatriation duties in Poland, had reached Hankey and the contents were less than glowing in their appreciation. According

to Irwin the Poles were turned loose to fend for themselves with only a railway ticket; there had been no grants of land as had been suggested by Warsaw. The officers did not even get that. Their treatment was described as being worse than that for displaced persons. The officers had to undergo interrogation by Soviet Officers with the ever—present threat of deportation to Siberia.

Hankey, who was seeking confirmation from Cavendish-Bentinck in Warsaw, wrote:

"...You will agree that it sounds pretty grim. Do you think that the treatment those Poles are receiving is in accordance with what the Polish Provisional Government promised, viz. equal treatment with those from the East?" [64]

The Polish security apparatus, alongside the NKVD, was busy arresting thousands of Poles and putting them in to the concentration camps of whose existence there was such a question in the West. Professor Savory in the Commons, on February 20th, 1946, tried to alert the Government to what was happening.

"I have here extracts from the correspondent of the Associated Press in Warsaw. I have made inquiries and have been told by an American friend that this Mr Larry Allen is one of their most respected and esteemed correspondents. This is his dispatch on 5th February: 'Authoritative sources reported today a new drive by Polish secret police whose net has swept an estimated 75,000 to 100,000 persons into prison. Official accounts of Police activity were not available and Brigadier General Stanislas Radkiewicz' - that is to say the Minister of Security '- has repeatedly refused to see journalists. Newspaper reports are censored and all incoming and outgoing messages are scrutinised by the military.'" [65]

While the Foreign Office could ignore Anders and his fellow officers as being avidly anti-Soviet - and therefore his opinions were biased - Military Intelligence sent the following assessment of Anders to the FO:

"General ANDERS and his country, especially his social class have suffered heavily at Russian hands, and it is not unnatural that he should feel strongly about RUSSIA at the present time. Evidence at our disposal, which is admittedly very limited, does not support his conclusions that Russian policy is fundamentally Imperialist and abetted by subversive use of the Communist parties in the democratic states." [66]

The views of independent outsiders could not be dismissed as easily as the MI branch dismissed Anders. As the information from Poland began to leak through to Whitehall so the seeds of doubt began to be sown.

During the preparation of Bevin's "Keynote" text the second paragraph was heavily amended in light of the new information coming out of Poland and the growing lack of faith in the good will of the Warsaw Poles in the statement which they attached. The text ran:

"The Government regard this statement as satisfactory. [They are satisfied that it represents the firm policy of the Polish Provisional Government and that that Government will abide by the detailed assurances it contains.]" [67]

The highlighted passage was removed from the text by the Permanent Under-secretary of State, Hankey's immediate superior, Christopher Warner with a margined minute: "? Omit: I am far from sure. CFAW". Although

the Foreign Office was 'far from sure' that the Poles would be safe returning to Poland they still advised them "to return to Poland of their own free will."

In a prepared answer to a question in the Commons, on the 7th December, 1946, the full Government position was laid out.

"Although we are watching for any confirmation of an unsatisfactory reception for repatriates, we do not want to discourage members of the Polish Armed Forces from returning home by giving grounds for anxiety based on unconfirmed rumours." [68]

There was also a line that the treatment was "In the main satisfactory" but this was removed by Hankey. In an answer to a supplementary question it was said that the....:

"...precise degree of assistance given to returned Polish Soldiers in Poland is, of course, a matter for the Polish Provisional Government."

This was a clear abrogation of all the responsibilities that Britain as a 'great power' had taken upon itself at Yalta and Potsdam. The message the Foreign Office were sending to the Polish troops was that the Poles should go back to Poland but their treatment there was not an issue that could be of concern to the British Government. The message did not inspire confidence among the Poles - on the one hand the British were telling the Poles that it was safe for them to return to Poland yet Bevin had felt compelled to publicly guarantee their safety, but was also put in the position of having to say that there was little that

could be done if the safety of the returnees was threatened.

One WREN, Jessie Bradnum, who was engaged to a Pole wrote to the Foreign Office on this very point:

"As an ardent trade unionist (Railway Clerks Assoc.) and a member of the Labour Party, I should very much appreciate your assurance that the Government will satisfy itself that all members of the Russian secret police are removed from Poland, before our Polish allies return to settle down. Furthermore can we assume that if Polish nationals return now they will receive the protection of HM Government should further political troubles arise." [69]

The Foreign Office reply was that "...the protection of His Majesty's Government cannot be extended to individual Poles in Poland."

The approach of the Government to events in Poland did change with time. Count Raczyński, in his published diary, writes of this change in attitude, in particular as it related to British POWs who had been freed by the Red Army and then robbed by the Soviet soldiers.

"I saw the effect of this at the Foreign Office. Till recently, many of our reliable reports had been met with scepticism because they conflicted with official hopes and wishes. Doubts were expressed to us as to whether we genuinely represented the Polish nation, whether the Lublin regime was really hated by almost all Poles, and whether the country's sufferings were so great as had been made out. These questions are now no longer asked." [70]

Although he overestimates the change in London, writing as the ambassador was in June, 1945, the mood change was certainly beginning.

In response to a request from the National Assistance Board for more 'active propaganda' to encourage men to return to Poland, Hankey of the FO wrote to Mr Whetmath of the NAB:

"As you know, the Foreign Secretary has, on numerous occasions made clear his view that it is the duty of all Poles who feel able to do so to return to Poland, in order to take their part in the work of national reconstruction. I do not think that we can go any further than this. The fact is that conditions in Poland are thoroughly unsatisfactory, a steady drive towards Communization is underway, and there have been many arrests of independent socialists and others who wish the tendency to be resisted. In the circumstances, we really could not accept the moral responsibility of advising men to go back."
[71]

Hankey's position in 1947 was considerably changed from the declaration of Bevin in the Commons, August 20th, 1945:

"...I inquired from Marshal Stalin whether the Soviet troops were to be withdrawn, and I was assured that they would be, with the exception of a small number required to maintain the communications necessary for the Soviet troops in Germany. That is not unreasonable. There is also the question of the presence of secret police in Poland. That still needs clearing up, but, with these assurances, I would urge Poles overseas, both military and civilian, to go back to their country and assume their responsibilities in building a new Poland. They will render a far greater service there than they can do from outside." [72]

For many of the Poles this change in attitude came too late. Many of the troops had been convinced by the early declarations of the British and Polish Provisional Governments, and many had fallen victim to the 'question of the presence of the secret police'

that had yet to be cleared up.

Paul Tabori, while on a visit to Warsaw in 1964, met a taxi driver "who cursed his own stupidity" for having returned to Poland. The driver had formerly been in the Anders Army but after the war had gone back to marry his pre-war girl-friend and quickly found himself in a Communist prison for having "spent the war at the wrong point of the compass". [73]

Jan Podoski was another repatriate who had cause to regret his actions. [74] An engineer before the war, he had worked for the Polish subsidiary of the Bradford based English Electric Company. Although he spent the first years after the war in the same position as many other Poles - trying to decided whether to return or not - it was a letter from the rector of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the Warsaw Polytechnic offering him a post lecturing that finally won him over to return. On July 7th, 1947, Podoski returned to Poland on a Polish freighter only to find himself the subject of an investigation by the security services. When the case went to trial he was sentenced to 8 years - a victory according to Podoski's defence lawyer considering the charges were spying and conspiracy. He was pardoned in 1989 by the post-Communist authorities.

The fact that the Polish Security Service - the UB, were arresting Poles on spurious charges was known to the British. In a confidential letter from Hankey

of the FO to Colonel Fitzgeorge-Balfour of the War Office he wrote on the subject of offering guarantees of safety to repatriates, on the 27th May, 1947, that: "The Warsaw Government is not trustworthy and if they were to break the guarantee, we should have no means of executing ours." [75]

Reports of conditions continued to reach the Foreign Office from both partisan and impartial sources. The Communists claimed that all talk of repression was part of the 'fascist' propaganda by Anders and his 'band of reactionaries'. On the other hand the claims of the exiles could also be played down. What was more difficult to ignore were the reports from independent sources such as Britons who had been to visit Poland and versions from the staff at the British embassy. A memorandum was sent to the Foreign Office by Sir Waldron Smithers MP in June, 1946, claiming that as many as 50,000 Poles had been imprisoned by the Communists. The report further stated that:

"...the new trend in British policy towards the Warsaw regime prevents official circles from taking sufficient interest in these people's fate to investigate the matter with the Soviet Government." [76]

Hankey's file minute read:

"I am sorry to say this deplorable story is likely to be true. I collected a good deal of information on the subject while in Warsaw, but the figure of 50,000 is probably much too high."

Hankey had a great deal of experience with Polish issues; before the War he had been the Second Secretary in Warsaw under Sir William Kennard, and he had been Acting Councillor under Cavendish-Bentinck when recognition had been given to Warsaw in 1945. There were few in the Foreign Office as qualified as Hankey to discuss events in Poland but even he underestimated the full extent of the internecine struggle that was going on in Poland.

Cavendish-Bentinck had presented a report to the FO in February, 1946, after a conversation with Dr Litwin, Warsaw's Minister of Health. While discussing the widespread typhus epidemic in Polish prisons the UK ambassador had come to the conclusion that there may have been some 40,000 political prisoners in Poland. [77] But even with the increased intelligence that was coming out of Poland the fact remained that the more that was known about events there, the less it would encourage Poles to return. In a Foreign Office letter to Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the problem of Anders inciting anti-Communist propaganda was again causing friction:

"...According to the "Times" of the 25th October, he has just claimed, in a speech made in Italy that, of those Poles who have opted to return to Poland, many have found their way into Russian concentration camps. We think that this is an exaggeration of the truth but, even if it were

true, it would not be at all the sort of thing we wanted said publicly, since it is just the sort of thing that discourages Poles from going back to Poland." [78]

The idea was that any public disclosure of what was happening in Poland should be covered-up to ensure that as many Poles as possible returned - even if prison did await many of them. It was a hopeless task to keep conditions in Poland a secret, although not for want of trying. The Poles refused to be convinced. As one British spouse wrote to Bevin:

"The position being as it is would you yourself return to that country were it yours? I am sure not.

I am the Scottish wife of a Polish soldier and I know what Poland means to him let alone his compatriots.

I assure you they would return to a man Mr Bevin, if only you'd give them that guarantee of safety which they so badly need. The whole question rests on the removal of the Russian Gestapo." [79]

Mrs Nowak makes a fair point that was difficult to answer by the Foreign Office. The British Government could not and would not guarantee the safety of the Poles returning to Poland; there was serious doubt about the safety of those returning to Poland and still they were encouraging more to go back.

One of the more distressing aspects of life in post-war Poland that drew criticism from the outside world was a resurgence of anti-Semitism that culminated in the Kielce pogrom on July 4th, 1946. As 40 Jews were murdered by local peasants the Government blamed

right-wing extremists while the more moderate politicians of the PSL blamed Government provocation.

Emil Sommerstein, a Zionist, gives one possible explanation for the phenomenon:

"Given the numerical weakness of the Party [PPR] and the traditionally high percentage of Jews in the leadership of the Polish Communist movement, it is not surprising that they became highly visible," [80]

Despite the sufferings of the Polish Jews under the Nazis they found themselves being attacked after the war by some Poles who saw them as the embodiment of all that was wrong with Poland. Underground organisations like the NSZ [National Armed Forces], had fought against the Germans and the Communists with equal vigour and now looked at the Jews as part of a conspiracy that drew Poland towards Moscow. The NSZ news-letter "Szczербiec", named after the coronation sword of the Polish Kings, still speaks of the "Żydokomuna" - the 'Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy' that the Nazis were so fond of talking about. The former Chief of Staff of the NSZ, Stanisław Żochowski, highlighted a top secret order from the Minister of Public Security, Stanisław Radkiewicz, to UB posts in Poland:

"Therefore we recommend to all directors of UB posts to prepare actions with the utmost secrecy to liquidate all opposition activists but they must be carried out as though they were done by bands of reactionaries." [81]

The Polish Government while instigating many of the most serious incidents in Poland then used them to denounce the NSZ and the anti-government opposition in general and use them as a pretext for extermination.

Everyone in Poland, and the Poles in the West, knew what was going on in Poland - the Communists, however, did not talk about it. It was only after many years that it became possible to review the post-war years with anything like an accurate picture.

Stefan Staszewski, the former Minister of Agriculture, once wrote:

"There is nothing to compare with the period of violence, cruelty and lawlessness that Poland experienced in 1944-47. Not thousands but tens of thousands of people were killed then. The official trials that were organised after 1949 were merely an epilogue to the liquidation of the wartime resistance, of activists, of independent parties, and of independent thought in general." [82]

During the period of de-Stalinisation in Poland, as in the Soviet Union after Khrushchev's 'secret speech', a wealth of information began to emerge as to what had been going on in the Communist world. Leon Wudzki, in a speech to the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers Party [PZPR] made on the 20th October, 1956, reflected on the horrors that had just passed:

"...People who were caught in the streets and released after seven days of interrogation, unfit to live. These people had to be taken to lunatic asylums. Others sought refuge in the asylums to avoid the security police. Men in panic, even honest men, were fleeing abroad to escape our system.... The whole city knew that people were

being murdered, the whole city knew that there were cells in which people were kept for three weeks standing in excrement...cold water was poured on people who were left in the cold to freeze...." [83]

But it was not only the Polish Security forces that were carrying out mass arrests, there was also the Soviet Army and Soviet Secret Police [NKVD] in Poland acting very much as a law unto itself. Officially the Soviet elements did not exist in Poland. After all had not Bierut told Churchill at Potsdam that "generally speaking, the whole Russian Army was leaving". [84] According to Bierut "The NKVD played no role in Poland". This, of course, was far from the truth. From the first days of Soviet 'liberation' many Poles had begun to disappear - mostly soldiers of the Home Army [AK]. In August 1944 the AK Commander of the Lublin area contacted AKHQ:

"The NKVD is carrying out mass arrests of Home Army Soldiers throughout the area. They are put into Majdanek. The staffs of the 3rd and 9th infantry divisions and General 'Halka' are there, about 200 officers and 2,500 privates. New isolated camps in the Krasków Włodawski marshes are being organised... the Majdanek officers and some of the men were deported to Russia on 23 August." [85]

Another AK source reported that from the 6th November, 1944, there had been mass arrests in the Polish People's Army of officers who had confessed to having belonged to the AK. Some 600 of these were being held in a camp at Skrobów, guarded by 900 Soviet

security guards, apparently dressed in Polish uniforms. [86] On the 6th March, 1945, the AK Commander of the Lwów district contacted the AKHQ that the Soviet authorities were systematically removing Poles from Eastern Małopolska, and in particular from Lwów. According to 'Winnica', who wrote the report, some 6,000 Poles had been arrested in Lwów in one week of January, this number included University professors, priests, students, workers from the gas-works and power station. The usual pretext for arrest was collaboration with the Germans. [87]

Another report to AKHQ came from Stefan Korboński in April, 1945. He reported that the greatest action of pacification by the Red Army was in the Turobina area. He wrote that units which had left Lublin going westwards had now returned and were in the process of rounding up more Poles. In Lublin Castle alone there were about 8,000 prisoners - there had also been some 99 death sentences carried out. He also wrote of the Soviet concentration camp in Skrobów which was exclusively for AK soldiers. [88]

The OC Białystok region, 'Mściszaw', a man who, according to Korboński, was "worshipped" in the area [89], ciphered AKHQ that the NKVD had deported more Polish intellectuals in the few months previous to May, 1945, than the Germans had done in four years of occupation. The Poles in the city's prisons were living

and dying in unheard of squalor. After interrogation the Poles were then deported to Siberia. [90]

'Mścisław' - Colonel Władysław Liniarski's report of 12th May, ten days after the one cited above, gave an even more disturbing picture of what happened to the Poles after the NKVD had finished questioning them. The NKVD took the Poles, former soldiers of the AK, out to the forest and shot them and, in order to keep the executions secret, the bodies were then buried in the mass graves of the victims murdered by the Gestapo in 1944. [91]

The battle around Białystok and into the Kresy around Grodno, had taken its toll on the AK establishment. By the start of February 1945, the AK had lost 6 Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs of Staff of the district, 2 Inspectors and 3 Deputy Inspectors, 3 Area Commandants, nearly 100 officers, 400 NCOs and several hundred AK soldiers and their families. The NKVD had deported 5,000 people from Grodno and 10,000 from Białystok and moved them to unknown destinations. [92]

The end of the war did not bring the peace that Poland so desperately needed. According to one source there were around 730,000 members of the Polish and Soviet security services in Poland out of a total population of 28 Million:

Polish People's Army :	200,000	
Soviet Army in Poland:	300,000	
UB and Militia	: 230,000	

	730,000	[93]

but this civil war was not one sided - up to 1948 there were some 1,364 units of various size and armament with a total manpower of 90,991. These units, of various political complexion, all joined in hatred of the Communists, made 7,154 attacks on UB and Militia targets killing 17,000 and capturing 100,000 separate arms. [94]

A top secret report from the Warsaw Ministry of the Interior from 1964 published for the first time in 1993, highlights the true scale of the armed opposition to the Communist Government from 1944 to 1956:

AK Groups: 353 of various sizes
 AK Youth Groups: 60 of various sizes
 AK Scout Groups: 80 of various sizes

WiN [Wolność i Niezawisłość] Groups: 136 of various sizes
 WiN Type Groups: 35 of various sizes
 WiN Type Youth Groups: 8 of various sizes
 (WiN - "Freedom and Independence" was formed in September, 1945, from the official command structure of the AK under Colonel Jan Rzepecki. At its height in 1946 it numbered some 20-25,000 men)

'Konspiracyjne Wojsko Polskie' [KWP] - 3,500 men
 'Wielkopolska Samodzielna Grupa Ochotnicza "Warta"
 [WSGO "Warta"] - 7,000 men
 'Ruch Oporu Armii Krajowej' [ROAK] - 1,500 men

Catholic Clerical Organisations: 20 of various sizes
 Clerical Youth Groups: 40 of various sizes

'Narodowe Siły Zbrojne' [NSZ] Groups: 170 of various sizes
 'Narodowe Zjednoczenie Wojskowe' Groups: 71 of various sizes
 'Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa' Groups: 10 of various sizes

Groups with NSZ ideology: 16 of various sizes
NSZ youth organisations: 8 of various sizes

Groups with no political affiliations: 178 of various sizes
Other Youth Organisations: 288 of various sizes
Unnamed organisations: 13 of various sizes
"Criminal Terrorist Groups": 94 of various sizes

Ukrainian Insurgent Army [UPA] - 3,500 men (April, 1947)

German Revisionist Groups: 49 of various sizes
Unnamed German Groups: 11 of various sizes
German Youth Groups: 16 of various sizes [95]

These underground groups were not all active at any one time - the UB, the specially formed KBW [Internal Security Corps] and the Army fought a relentless and ruthless campaign of repression that led to many deaths and imprisonments. According to Zbigniew Brzeziński, former US National Security Adviser, from 1945 to 1949 there were around 6,000 secret executions in Poland. People simply disappeared into the network of 97 concentration camps never to be seen again. [96]

The prisons were full after the war. German prisoners and war criminals shared the same cells as the heroes of the Polish underground. In Jerzy Topolski's newest history of Poland, published in Warsaw in 1992, he cites the fact that Kazimierz Moczarski of the AK GHQ was arrested and put into the same cell as SS General Jurgen Stroop, responsible for the brutal liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. [97] But this was repeated all over Poland. The

prison roll for Hrubieszów, April 1947, is a guide to the pretext of many arrests:

Membership of WiN	: 13
Conspiracy	: 9
Possession of Arms	: 7
Collaboration with Germans	: 5
Murder	: 2
Conspiracy + Desertion	: 2
Conspiracy + Manslaughter	: 2
Conspiracy + Possession of Arms	: 1
Assault	: 1
Desertion	: 1
Robbery	: 1
Membership of UPA	: 1

Prisoners in total : 45 [98]

Political crime was high on the agenda of the Polish Militia and UB. The virtual civil war in the country divided families and set brother against brother. One regional security commander published the following announcement:

"On the night of 4/5th November, 1945, the dangerous bandit Piotr Wieprow was shot by Special Units in Piaski; the village of Paszki Małe; Parish of Białya. Piotr Wieprow had been proved to be in several armed raids in the area. It is also announced here that the younger brother of Piotr Wieprow serves in the Security Office. [99]

The situation, and its effects on Polish society, was not lost on the Central Committee. Gomułka, later to fall from official grace, spoke at the PPR Plenary Session on the 20th May, 1945;

"A second state within our state is beginning to rise up over our heads. The security organs themselves follow a certain policy in which no one

can interfere. At times the reaction has realised its policy through our security organs. The activities of security include numerous examples of narrow sectarian policies.... People are being held in bestial conditions in our jails. We must stop this. People are either becoming demoralised or leaving.... This is a descent down the wrong political path which does us political harm." [100]

The situation in Poland was not lost on London either. After reading the "Warsaw Weekly Summary", No.7, for March 1st, 1947, Hankey of the FO minuted: "The present system really is the so-called 'dictatorship of the proletariat' being put into practice." [101]

The stories of atrocities that were coming out of Poland were horrific indeed. In his memoirs Mikołajczyk describes the activities of the Bochnia Secret Police Commander:

"Bartkowicz tortured the mayor of Lapanow, Jan Jarotek, to a pitilessly slow death in full view of the victim's son. He then ordered his torturers to seize Jozef Szydlowski, the Peasant Party's local executive committee member, whose tongue was cut out, fingernails ripped off and eyes seared with a hot poker before he was finally shot." [102]

The Peasant Party came under serious attack from the regime, and this was heightened just prior to the elections. In 1946 the PSL presented a list of complaints to the Provisional Government:

- "1. Mass arrests, destruction and robbery by security police in Sarniki near Siedlce.
2. Murder of Jan Orlowski in Gladczyń. He was a district executive of the PSL.

3. Mass arrests, burning of three villages in Siedlce area.
4. Murder of Zygmunt Olszowiec near Lublin.
5. Illegal arrests of Tadeusz Nowak + Wojciech Drozdzik: PSL MPs.
6. Murder of Stefan Zurawinski.
7. Murder of 'Wici' [PSL Youth Movement] official Edward Chruscielewski in Krasnik nr Lublin.
8. Murders in Kepno.
9. Shooting of Franciszek Bozer, PSL secretary from Miechow nr Krakow.
10. Intimidation of Warsaw's PSL 'Self Help' group + mass arrests.
11. Torture of Wladyslaw Machowiak + Bronislaw Styczynski: Mogilo nr Poznan.
12. Murder of PSL Chairman Joseph Majka of Kilczyce in the Cieszyn prison + burning of his house.
13. Murder of PSL Chairman Franciszek Lazowski at Sierpce.
14. Murder of Josef Kulesza....." etc etc. [103]

Mikołajczyk asked the question of whether countries "subjugated by Communists [could] liberate themselves without outside help?" His answer was a decisive "No." [104]

Joseph Retinger [see biography page 462] had his own experience of the Security apparatus:

"The day I was leaving Warsaw with my chief assistant, Mr Celt, I was told at the last moment that there was no seat on the plane for him, but was assured by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Berman, as well as by the Foreign minister, Mr Modzelewski, that he would follow on the next plane. In view of this formal assurance I left without misgiving. Celt did not arrive by the next plane, and after a few weeks I learned that after my departure he had been jailed, together with the experts. I received no reply to my repeated telegrams to Mr Berman, but through the grapevine I heard that Celt was still in prison." [105]

It was only Retinger's personal intervention with Molotov that got Celt released - two years later Celt

had escaped to Austria.

The diplomatic corps was also not immune from the scrutiny of the UB. Whereas the foreign diplomats were out of reach - the worst that threatened them was to be expelled from the country - the staff of the embassies and legations, who were mostly Poles, as well as the friends of the diplomats were liable to persecution. Count Grocholski, a long time friend of the British ambassador, was arrested by the UB at his country residence along with the ambassador. Cavendish-Bentinck was released because of his diplomatic immunity, Grocholski was not so lucky. At his trial the Count confessed to association with the political underground and to communicating information to a foreign diplomat. On the 14th of January, 1947, Count Grocholski was executed - as the former US ambassador, Arthur Bliss Lane, commented; this was five days before the elections in Poland and was to be seen as a warning to other Poles not to tell the outside world about the vote rigging that was to come. [106]

The US Embassy also had evidence of the UB in action with the arrest of Mrs Dmochowska, a US citizen working in the Embassy. At her trial in August, 1946, she too 'confessed' to the charges that were laid

against her and was sentenced to five years. Although she was released in the 1947 Amnesty it only confirmed Bliss-Lane's view that if the Polish State did not respect US citizens then there was little hope for the Poles. [107]

The Polish Courts came in for criticism from many interested parties. One member of the public sent the Foreign Office a newspaper cutting of the Vice-Minister of Justice Tadeusz Rek's speech that the courts should defend working class interests and fight against 'the enemies of the people'. The note attached to the cutting was addressed to Hankey.

Mr Hankey, "This is almost verbatim what Hitler did to the German courts. Only of course they had to defend N.Socialism against its enemies and give judgement in the N.Soc. spirit rather than in accordance with the law. Your friends every day in every way are more and more apeing Hitler and I find that very repugnant." [108]

Hankey's minute to this reads:

"So do I. I dislike even more to see the daily abolition of truth, mercy and justice."

The Foreign Office plan was to have an information campaign by the BBC to "blacken the face of E[ast] European justice". The idea was to stop the embassy trials by making them appear ridiculous in advance. [109]

There is no doubt that the British Government knew of the decline in Polish law. On the 3rd February, 1948, the FO's John Russell in Warsaw sent Hankey a report to indulge Hankey's "morbid interest in the more gruesome manifestations of the Workers' Paradise." [110] Similarly the Polish decree of 20th January, 1946, making provision for "responsibility for the defeat of Poland in September, 1939 and for aiding and abetting the introduction of fascism in the state before the second world war" to be punished was commented upon by Sir Donald Gainer to the Foreign Office.

"I need hardly point out the sinister possibilities of this retrospective legislation and it will be interesting to see how far the decree is used to settle old scores." [111]

There were other decrees passed that were equally specific to the socialist world. "Reducing the efficiency of work" as well as "mocking or abusing the State" were punishable, as was spreading "false news which is capable of injuring vitally the interests of the Polish State or of lowering the dignity of its authoritative organs." These were described in the decree of June 13th, 1946, as "Offences Particularly Dangerous During the Reconstruction of the State." In reality it meant that anyone could be arrested by the security police and some charge would be found to take

them to trial - and invariably they would confess to the charges themselves, although confession was not, as ambassador Sir Donald Gainer pointed out in his letter to the FO on the 29th of December, 1947, to be taken as a true indication of guilt. One case he highlighted had 'confessed' his crime and been convicted. The date of his appeal did not come through until after he had finished his term in prison but he went through the motions of the appeal to regain his civic rights which had been withdrawn by the original court: he was acquitted on all charges even though he had confessed. The obvious conclusion drawn by the British ambassador was that a confession was recognised as being valueless even by the Polish courts. [112]

Eugen Loeb1, who was himself persecuted by the Secret Police in Czechoslovakia, described the way that confessions were extracted:

"What they achieve is to demoralize. They have time, you see. If they had beaten me up - and if I had given in, under pain - well, one day pain disappears and I would deny it all again. But here I had to convince myself, and in this demoralized state of affairs (and this is a process of demoralization), I confessed to whatever they wanted." [113]

In the best Orwellian tradition of "1984", it was not enough that the convict be made to confess - he had to believe his own confession as well.

According to the National Committee for a Free Europe's review of the Year: 1950, published in New York, Poland had from 300,000 to half a million prisoners in compulsory labour camps. The construction of the Odra-Danube Canal had led to a mass wave of arrests and a massive camp being built to house the 45,000 prisoners. The review continues:

"The Warsaw regime had already begun in 1945 systematically to deprive the working class of all social rights, first of all by banning strikes (unlawfully) and later by gradually imposing methods of so-called competitive work (stakhanovism), piece-work pay, etc. These steps were preliminary to the introduction of a system of slave labour, fully realised only in 1950."
[114]

The point of all this was not lost in the discussion about the Polish Armed Forces in the West. Whereas it was easy to say that all Poles ought to go back to Poland, the reality of the situation was far from ideal for return. The MP for Glasgow, Comlachie, McGovern, made a speech during the second reading of the Polish Resettlement Bill:

"If Warsaw wants these men - and I would like to see them go back to their own country - let them make conditions tolerable in Poland. Let them give these men freedom of thought, and see that there is fair play for all. Let them create a Poland where a man is free to express his will, not, as it is today, a country where darkness prevails, where every person who opposes the Communist regime is condemned as a fascist." [115]

Not all MPs were as well reasoned as McGovern. Reading the speeches made by some - given nearly fifty years of hind-sight - reveals an overwhelming and almost embarrassing lack of objectivity in their view of post-war events. One Labour MP made the following, remarkable, speech during the Yalta debate:

"The first point I want to make on that subject is this. What about the good faith of the USSR? I might have dilated upon that, and hon. Members would not have been surprised if I had given a number of instances of its good faith, but I do not wish to make my speech longer.... Does she [the USSR] want to absorb Poland herself or make a puppet of Poland? [...] I do not see for one moment why she should desire, in the very least, to make the Polish a puppet. It would only lead to endless squabbles with Great Britain and the United States. Further, the Soviet Union has shown very clearly in recent months that she values, at least as much as we do, the vital business of the three Great Powers remaining friends. ...One of the amazingly remarkable things demonstrated in this war is that a multi-national state like the Soviet Union, with a great variety of races and with a hideous history of repression in Tsarist days of almost all these races by one of them, has remained completely strong and coherent, so that the ordinary observer does not know that it is a multi-national state. Remember that every nation within it has the absolute right to secede at any moment, but none has wanted to, because it is perfectly happy where it is." [116]

Fortunately not every one agreed with Labour's Mr Pritt, but there were not enough MPs who opposed him. The debate over Yalta was the real test in Parliament of the true friends of Poland and the issues which her cause represented. Vice-Admiral Taylor spoke eloquently on the subject.

"We have won the war, but the Poles say that they have lost it. We owe Poland a great debt. Surely it is our obligation to Poland to see to it that the sovereignty, independence and freedom of Poland are assured by democratic means in that country in fulfilment of our pledges and our principles and as an earnest of our gratitude to her heroic people." [117]

One of the bravest speeches was by the Conservative MP, Captain McEwen, who stood on a point of honour and protested about what was happening to Poland:

"However, I want to deal in the first instance with the excuse which has been put forward - What else could we have done ? [...] Quite apart from the unworthiness of such a reason being put forward by a great Power which has been dealing, presumably, on an equal footing with the other great Powers in a conference, in my view it would have been better to say frankly that we could not, in this instance agree. [...] Then it is said: "If that is the line you take, then you would have left the Poles in Poland to what you consider to be a Russianized Lublin Government and done nothing for them." On the whole, and taking the admittedly pessimistic view of the future of the Poles under the arrangements which have been reached, which I do, I would answer: "Yes, I do not think they would have been much worse off." [Hon Members: "Oh."] Believe me, I am not only thinking, or even mainly thinking, in this respect of Poland; I am thinking of this country. Had we refused to agree, and stuck to the Arciszewski Government... I say we would at least now have no cause to be ashamed. If it is said further that had we done so we would have found ourselves in complete diplomatic isolation, why then, I can only marvel that even now, at this late hour, we have still not learned the lesson of 1940 - that it is a very little thing to stand alone if we are convinced that we are standing for the right, nor, in that cause will we ever lack friends for long. [...]

What has been done in the Crimea Conference has been done, but I for one cannot join in the chorus of approval which has greeted its doing, and both for the sake of my conscience and in the hope of lessening the possibilities of this sort of thing repeating itself at some future stage, I feel I cannot allow it to pass without registering a definite but uncompromising protest." [118]

When the Division came the Yalta Declaration was passed with 413 Ayes and no votes against (although several Members, including Capt. McEwen abstained). [119] There was one note of dissent in the proceedings with several MPs sponsoring an amendment to the original declaration which read:

"But, remembering that Great Britain took up arms in a war of which the immediate cause was the defence of Poland against German aggression and in which the overriding motive was the prevention of the domination by a strong nation of its weaker neighbours, regrets the decision to transfer to another power the territory of an ally contrary to treaty and to Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter and furthermore regrets the failure to ensure to those nations which have been liberated from German oppression the full right to chose their own government free from the influence of any other power." [120]

This was supported by 25 MPs and the Commons threw it out with 396 Noes. It is one of the perverse ironies of history that the people who most objected to the Munich Agreement in 1938 tended to be the most ardent supporters of the Yalta Accords. Mr Gallacher, the Communist, said the following of Munich:

"No one desires peace more than I and my party, but it must be a peace based upon freedom and democracy and not upon the cutting up and destruction of a small state." [121]

Gallacher's views on the post-war settlement are dealt with in Chapter 6 but the contradiction comes in his support for small states against Nazism yet supported the Soviet Union against the small states of East Central Europe. Umiastowski points out the other anomaly of the situation:

"The members of Parliament who cast their vote in approval of Churchill's policy in the Crimea were the same men from whom Chamberlain had collected 366 votes ...in support of his deal at Munich." [122]

As Poland slipped into totalitarianism and the extinction of recognised law, so the 'great powers' applauded themselves that they had solved the 'Polish Question'. But as Leszek Kołakowski put it forty years after the meeting in the Crimea:

"Let us remember, Poland was in no way represented at Yalta and the fate of millions was decided by three old men: a bloodthirsty tyrant, a terminally ill statesman who knew little about the issues, and a Realpolitiker of a declining Empire." [123]

The attitude pursued by many British MPs in relation to the Soviet Union was akin to the 'Peace at all costs' policy of before the war. Another of the Conservative MPs who supported the Yalta Amendment, Mr Raikes,

championed the idea that Poland, with British help, was dismantling democracy.

"...even though Great Britain might not be able at this stage to do much for Poland, we could do something more than underwrite a charter for Poland which, without proper safeguards, must be the end of Poland. The Prime Minister said in his speech that of course all parties will have free elections, except pro-Nazi and anti-democratic parties. I challenge him now: Can he name one pro-Nazi party in Poland? If there is one country which, under suffering and misery, has kept its soul, it is Poland. We know so well that the Russians, and indeed the Lublin definition of 'democracy' and 'Pro-Nazi' are rather different from ours. Everybody with whom you disagree in Russia is a pro-Nazi or an anti-democrat. [...]

We have even had General Bor himself, the hero of Warsaw, described as a capitulating traitor in the pay of Berlin." [124]

The Poles in the West were not as reticent as the British authorities might have liked about the conditions in Poland. On the 5th of May, 1939, Poland's Foreign Minister, Colonel Beck spoke to the Polish Sejm:

"Peace is a valuable and desirable thing. Our generation, which bled in several wars, surely deserves a period of peace. However, peace, like almost all things of this world has its price, high but definable. We in Poland do not know the conception of peace at any price. There is only one thing in the life of men, nations and states which is without price - that is honour." [125]

As discredited as the pre-war regime was, the words of Colonel Beck were as true in 1945 as they were in 1939 and they were shared by most of the Poles who refused

to return to Poland. The Polish press in the West attacked the Western Allies' apparent lack of will to resist Moscow. An article entitled: "The Ideology Of The Capitulators - In What Fashion Should Poles Gain The Trust Of The Soviet Union?" in the "Polish Daily & Soldiers Daily" attacked what it saw as craven submission to the Soviet Union:

"Is it by defiling oneself, by calling ourselves fascists, blackguards, and Hitlerite lackeys from morning to evening? Is it by declaring war on Europe, the Church, European culture? Is it by the promise, that with the dazed peasant and gaunt worker whom we have created with our very own Polish hands that we will destroy our intelligentsia, faith, culture, and accept a faith that is alien to us, which is nothing to us.... History teaches us that no one can stop dictatorial totalitarianism through even the farthest reaching compromises...." [126]

The Poles' sense of isolation was profound. The Poles in the West knew what conditions in Poland were like, and they knew that the British and US Governments also knew, yet they were still expected to remain silent and not complain. Neal Ascherson wrote that after five years of Nazi occupation the liberation of Poland had come "...wearing a uniform of irony". [127] In 1945, the Polish American Congress announced:

"As Poland's independence is being strangled by a Soviet military noose, there is not a single word of protest from our government. This silence only

intensifies the mental, physical and spiritual
anguish of the people of Poland." [128]

-:-

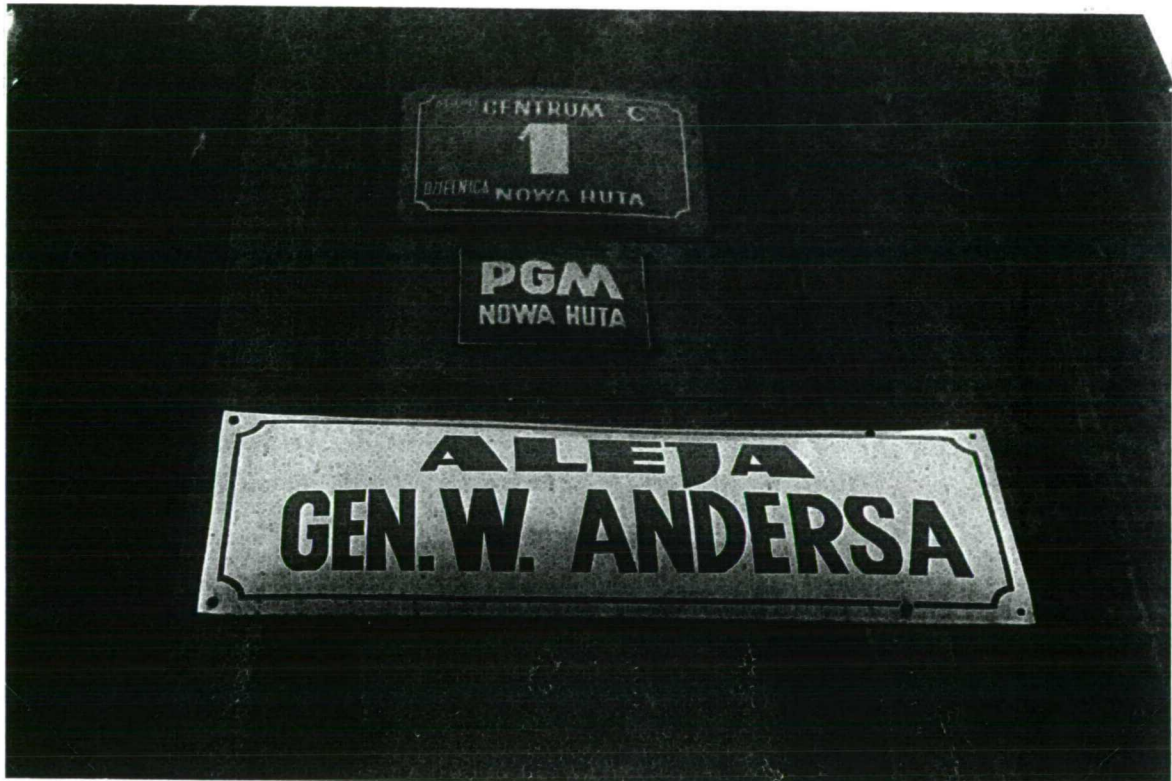
"The world is too weary to protest.
And for Poland, Justice sleeps."

Polish American Congress
September 27th, 1945.[129]

CHAPTER FIVE

"The Regime Holds Out Its Hand..."

Warsaw's Reaction To The Repatriation
Of The Poles.



After Half A Century General Anders Is
Finally Acknowledged in Poland.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Poland of 1945 had lost six million people in the death camps, the execution grounds, and as a result of the many battles that occurred in the country as the war front swept east and then swept back to the west. The country was also short of some one and a half million Poles who had, mostly through no fault of their own, found themselves beyond Poland's borders as Displaced Persons and members of the Polish Armed Forces.

If Poland was to make good the devastation that five years of war had brought to it then the Poles needed all the help they could get, in particular they needed hands to work. The country could not make good the six million immediately but it could encourage as many Poles as possible to return from abroad to help in reconstruction.

Despite the many calls for the Poles abroad to return there is still a great deal of doubt as to the good will of the Polish Provisional Government. Certainly many of the members of the Polish Repatriation Missions were honourable men whose positive efforts can not be doubted, yet even they, given time and the light of experience, came to believe that they were fighting against a hidden agenda in which the repatriates, and in particular the Polish Armed Forces in the West, were to play no part.

The Information Bureau for Military Affairs of the Citizen's Committee for Poles announced in August, 1945:

"The overwhelming majority of soldiers in emigration have decided to return to Poland. There are numerous cases where this figure reaches 90-100% of the total personnel of the unit. This is happening despite the anti-patriotic propaganda of General Bór-Komorowski, Kopański, Głuchowski, Iżycki and others....

The Polish soldier in emigration has understood that his place is at home, helping - in the ranks of the army or in the workshops - to build a new democratic Poland.

Poland is being raised from her collapse and is being rebuilt. No true Pole can absent himself from this undertaking...." [1]

The Polish Government was unequivocal in its appeal for Poles to return to Poland yet often this call fell on deaf ears - most Poles distrusted the Warsaw regime and had little faith in the promise of good treatment. What is more revealing is the attitude of many leading Poles who were prepared to work with the new regime while at the same time secretly telling anyone who would listen that all was not well in Poland. General Boruta-Spiechowicz was one senior officer who had been to the 'new' Poland and had returned to London to resign his commission before returning to Poland for good. In a top secret meeting with War Office representatives in March 1946, Boruta outlined what he considered to be Warsaw's attitude to repatriation. The WO footnote said the talks were "...of particular secrecy + Boruta's name should not be used in conjunction with information contained." Brigadier Davy's conclusions about the meeting were:

4. Boruta considers that the present regime does not want the Polish Armed Forces back in Poland, especially before the elections. It is generally believed that the vast majority of them are supporters of Mikolaiczuk [sic]. It is not a question of their numbers and their personal votes, but rather of the moral influence they would have in favour of the Peasant Party. All the present difficulties are really intended to delay their return until the elections are over and decided in favour of the present regime.

5. Boruta considers that the only solution which can solve our problem of disposing of the Poles and the Polish problem of ensuring freedom for Poland is for all Poles, with the exception of a few who would be unacceptable in Poland, to return to Poland unconditionally as soon as the terms are published. He fears that, encouraged by what Warsaw calls the "black reactionaries", they will at once start to stipulate that they must return as armed units or at least as armed soldiers. This would immediately give an excuse to the Warsaw authorities for further procrastination. If on the other hand they agreed to return unconditionally the Warsaw authorities could hardly refuse to receive them." [2]

These views were confirmed by another of the Poles who had gone over to the Provisional Government - the old 'ruffian' as Hancock of the FO had called him - Professor Kot, Warsaw's newly appointed ambassador to Rome:

"I understand that Professor Kot has admitted to Major Gawronski that he is much embarrassed by the Polish Government's unwillingness to accept repatriates. He blames the Communists in Warsaw for the attitude and claims that they are opposed to the repatriation of anyone who might join M.Mikolajczyk's party". [3]

The report went on that it could not be ruled out that the Polish authorities would not allow the ships bringing the soldiers to Poland to dock. These secret views were far from the official pronouncements of the new regime. The other 'ruffian' in Rome, Warsaw's military attache, Colonel Sidor, in his book "W Niewoli U

Andersa" - wrote that:

"The attitude of the Polish Government towards the soldiers and officers of the 2nd Corps was completely positive and remains so today [written 1947]. The Polish people condemn the criminal politics of the leaders of the 2nd Corps but still wanted the speediest repatriation of all the Polish soldiers who found themselves beyond Poland's borders." [4]

The Poles in Warsaw declared that they wanted the repatriation to go ahead; the British certainly wanted to rid themselves of the Poles in their charge and speeded the situation along, yet at the same time Warsaw appeared to be stalling the issue. There seemed to be some contradiction in the way the Poles were acting and the Foreign Office found it increasingly difficult to work out just what the Provisional Government was up to - and Hankey told Kuropieska as much in April, 1946. He, for one, could not see what the problem was and why the Poles who did want to go back were not being allowed to do so. [5]

The staff of the Polish Legations across Europe and of the State Directorate for Repatriation [PUR] were at the front line of trying to get the Poles to return to Poland. The effectiveness of these bodies largely depended on the quality of staff that were employed. According to a PUR directive of 1945, members of Military Missions should be:

"Positive and Idealistic about the new political system.

a/ They should be well informed about the construction of the new system;

b/ they should be intelligent and be able to give

clear and convincing answers to the most sensitive of questions;
c/ they should be fully acquainted with both foreign and internal politics and with the state of the national economy;
d/ they should pay particular attention to their personal behaviour, especially in the consumption of alcohol." [6]

In London Colonel Kuropieska was Warsaw's man to deal with military repatriation. He had originally been selected to be on the Polish Armed Forces General Staff after Warsaw took over command - if and when the British let them. The Commander-in-Chief was to be General Świerczewski, his deputy and Chief of Political Affairs was Colonel Grosz, the Chief of Staff was General Mossor, Chief of the Information Department was Lt-Col. Zadrzyński, and Colonel Kuropieska was to have been the Chief of Operations. When Warsaw's plans fell through Kuropieska was sent to London as part of the Repatriation Mission under General Modelski. He was there appointed as military attaché, almost by default. The first candidate, Paris attaché Colonel Naszkowski, was offered the post but declined saying he would prefer to stay in France - ostensibly as his wife was ill. Kuropieska, a committed supporter of the new regime in Poland, seems, by his own pen at least, to have had a genuine concern for the repatriation of the Poles in the West and criticises the shortcomings of his fellow Mission members. General Modelski was criticised by him as bearing a grudge against the very people he was

supposed to be encouraging to return; the naval attaché was criticised for much the same reason. According to Kuropieska Commodore Jerzy Klossowski was responsible for many sailors not going home. Before the war he had been by-passed for promotion and had retired from active service in 1934. He was unknown in the new Navy and the fact that he was sarcastic by nature did not endear him to anyone. [7] Similarly General Mossor seemed to be a bad choice to send to London. Kuropieska reports Mossor as saying of the officers who fought in the September Campaign that when they returned to Poland they would have "buckets of slops thrown over them." [8] Hardly words designed to encourage a mass return of the Officer Corps - and this from the proposed Chief of Staff. The only member of the Mission that Kuropieska seems to have had any respect for at all was Colonel Grosz who was, according to Kuropieska, the real head of the Mission, not only intellectually but by nature of the trust put in him by the political leaders in Warsaw. [9] The impression the military attaché gives is that if the Provisional Government had wanted not to encourage repatriation then they had the right staff in London.

The biggest complaint from Warsaw's representatives was that they were rarely told just what they were expected to do or how they were expected to do it. Kuropieska wrote to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in

Warsaw with his own ideas as to why he was in London:

"I have not been called to formulate the aims of our game with the British and - while I am sure these aims have been formulated - I am not party to their contents. For the purposes of my work here I take our aim to be the following:

1. To return to Poland as many able and morally healthy citizens as possible. [...]" [10]

Even officers working towards the aim of full repatriation had to contend with the unpredictable and, more often than not, unhelpful interventions from Warsaw.

One of the biggest shocks for Kuropieska came with the news that as of the 14th of February, 1946, Warsaw was disclaiming the Polish Armed Forces in the West. He was told about the move while on a visit to Warsaw and told to inform Deputy-Foreign Minister Modzelewski, who was then on a visit in London. Because Kuropieska's plane was delayed in Brussels by bad weather Modzelewski had to read about the move from a British newspaper. It seemed that there was little or no coherent policy in Warsaw. This was confirmed by Kuropieska who adds that at a press conference just prior to his departure from Warsaw there had been no mention made of the move. [11]

Opinions were divided as to the benefits of Warsaw's February edict. Wilk, the editor of the PSL paper, told Kuropieska that the timing of the move was particularly bad. Apparently talks with the British were going well and that some 80% of the Polish forces may have gone back, but following the announcement Warsaw would be lucky if 10 to 15% went back. Wilk found it difficult to

work out the reasoning behind the Provisional Government's thinking. Kuropieska, loyal to the regime, said that the situation had not changed and if anything it made repatriation more likely. [12]

One of the principal reasons for denying the Polish forces in the way Warsaw did was to encourage Britain to demobilise the troops and to make the appropriate payments. Current British policy was to return Poles to Poland as soldiers and leave it up to Poland to demobilise them. In this way it was the Polish Government who were liable for demob payments and not London. This had led to many protests from the Polish Embassy accusing London of bad faith and led to the move in February that Polish Consulates would not deal with Polish soldiers but only civilians. The logic being that if the British wanted to be rid of the Poles - and Warsaw knew they did - then they would have to pay the demobilisation payments. [13]

The question of war gratuities threatened to disrupt the whole process of repatriation. The first transport from the UK was held up for a time as soldiers protested at the way they were being sent home. It was certainly not the grand return to Poland that most had expected; if anything it had been rushed and makeshift. As the ship was about to leave on New Year's Eve, 1945, - Bevin had promised Parliament that repatriation would begin that year - the soldiers wanted to leave their weapons on the

jetty as a silent protest but on contacting Warsaw Kuropieska told them that they should not go ahead with the protest. [14]

There were very few issues on which the Poles in London and in Warsaw agreed but London's apparent tightfisted approach to Polish soldiers returning home was one. Major Jan Kuźniarz of the Polish (London) Demobilisation Office wrote to the Deputy Chief of Staff saying that French, Belgian, Czech and Dutch soldiers, whose contribution to the war effort had not been as great as that of the Poles and whose home situation was not as grave, had no restrictions as to what they could take home with them. Similarly a British rifleman who was being sent home from overseas could, after 5 years service, carry 100kgs of luggage, an officer could carry 250kgs all at the Government's expense. As for gratuities, other ranks were paid £100, a lieutenant £150 and a colonel £280. A Pole, on the other hand, received no gratuity, no civilian clothing and could not even take things he had bought with his own money unless he could carry them. Worse than this was the worry that the savings that soldiers had made might well be wasted due to a problem in the transfer of funds from British to Polish banks. [15] The kit that a Polish soldier was allowed to take with him was:

Battledress	Rations: 10 Day
Dress Coat	Sterling: £5.00
Underwear x2	(or £10.00 in other currency)
Shirts x2	Baggage: Hand portable.

Blankets x3
Kitbag
Bread sack
Webbing Harness
Rifle or Pistol (no ammunition) [16]

The issue again made it to the House of Commons when the Secretary of State for War, Mr Bellenger, was asked how many Polish soldiers in Italy had volunteered for repatriation since Bevin's "Keynote" speech. Bellenger's answer was that 3,500 had volunteered but 2,300 had subsequently refused repatriation at the last moment, the reason for these refusals was put down to not being paid war gratuities, arrangements not having been made to move savings to Poland and the fact that new uniforms had not been issued to soldiers. [17]

The question of the soldiers' savings was proving such a problem that the British Government had to produce a leaflet to hand to Polish soldiers explaining the financial aspects of repatriation. No Postal Orders were to be taken out of the UK, similarly US and Canadian Dollars and Swiss Francs were forbidden to be taken abroad. No more than £5.00 Sterling was allowed to be taken out of the country and any excess was to be paid into the Post Office Savings Bank and they could then take the savings book with them to Poland or they could deposit the book with the British authorities for safe keeping, the soldier would then get a receipt. The leaflet concluded with the words that "exact compliance with the above instructions will ensure the absolute

security of their savings." [18]

The British did finally concede the point of gratuities but on a discretionary basis - the 22nd May, 1946, was chosen as the date from when payments would be made. It was argued in the Foreign Office that prior to that date the British Government did not have to make payment and after that date they were only paid as a symbol of good faith to encourage the Poles to return. [19] This then prompted Warsaw's representatives to protest in the name of all the soldiers who had returned to Poland without these payments as they tried to get London to come forward with the back pay, with little success. Every Polish soldier who had entered the Polish Armed Forces prior to the 15th of June, 1945, and had completed 180 days service was entitled, for every month served, to 10 US Dollars as a Private, 12 US Dollars as a Corporal and so on up the scale. Further to this they would be entitled to 56 days paid leave as soon as they crossed the Polish border. [20] As far as the War and Foreign Offices were concerned they were going out of their way to help the Poles get home, yet the Provisional Government still appeared to be looking for a fight with London.

One episode that confirmed London's worst fears about the positive attitude of the Poles was the protest by Marshal Rola-Zymierski that in the returning convoys only one round of ammunition was issued per man.

The British were again accused of bad faith. The Foreign Office did its best to explain that the ammunition, 2,000 rounds in all, had been loaded on the ship and was never intended for individual distribution, its presence was meant to be seen as symbolic. The FO had no objection to a 'reasonable' amount of ammunition being carried per man providing the Warsaw authorities said what they considered as 'reasonable'. Dennis Allen of the FO, in a letter to Cavendish-Bentinck, could not help coming to the conclusion that: "It seems pretty clear that, whatever arrangements are made, the Polish authorities will complain about something!". Major Roberts of the WO had come to much the same opinion, writing to Hancock of the FO, he stated that: "There is no doubt that the Warsaw Poles are all out to pick upon any and every excuse for a complaint, whether one is justified or not!" [21]

Warsaw's February 14th announcement, bombshell as it was, was also a mixed blessing for the British administration as it gave them a free hand in dealing with the Polish Armed Forces. It also gave them the reasoning that if Warsaw had given up its claim to the Polish Armed Forces it must also have given up its claim to the not insubstantial military hardware that went with a modern army, and for which Poland was making demands. Warsaw was again rapidly using up its store of British goodwill in its dealings with London.

Kuropieska had told Hankey that the Poles wanted the planes of the Polish Squadrons of the RAF to be handed over to Warsaw's control. He further added that the planes had no military value to Poland, equipped as they were with Soviet hardware, but the gift would be seen as an earnest gesture of Britain's goodwill towards Poland. Hankey's reply was that Britain could not afford such gestures and the Provisional Government was not helping its own cause by its persecution of the PSL and by the fact that Britain had already given Poland Bailey bridges with no response from the Warsaw Poles. [22] Joseph Retinger acting as an intermediary between the British Government and the Warsaw Poles, recalled the same incident:

"So long as the supplies were arriving, the Warsaw officials were all smiles, and I was received as a friend and benefactor. However, when I asked them to thank the British ambassador they would not do so. On the contrary, they prevented any publicity in Poland which would show that the goods were gifts from Britain. [...]

I asked the Polish authorities a number of times to thank the British Government, and at least to pay their share of the expenses but they flatly refused. Mr Cavendish-Bentinck told me that as they could not do otherwise, they invited him to the inauguration of the Stettin Bridge, but during the ceremony not a word was said of its being a gift from Britain." [23]

The feeling of hostility towards the Warsaw Poles reached the highest level of Government - even to Bevin himself. Retinger had a first hand encounter with Bevin's true feelings.

"Incidentally, when I was taking Mr Modzelewski along the long corridors of the House of Commons to Sir Stafford's [Cripps] room I met Ernest Bevin, who said in his very rough way: "I hear that you are

bringing these bastards from Warsaw here. I agree that you ought to do your best for your country, but I am sorry that you are in such bad company." [24]

Personal feelings aside, there were more substantial reasons why the British Government was reluctant to give Warsaw more military equipment than it had to. Kuropieska recounts that the former Tory Air Minister, Sir Archibald Sinclair, had told Polish Pilot-Colonel Brzezina that the Polish Forces should not return to Poland straight away, at least not for two years, so as not to give away military secrets to a "potential adversary". Although Kuropieska had heard the exiles using such 'cold-war' rhetoric he was surprised that it had come from such a high British source. [25]

The behaviour of the Warsaw authorities did not help their own cause in this issue. The provisions of the Yalta Agreement had not been fulfilled, as the Conservative Opposition did not fail to communicate at every opportunity in the Commons; there had not been elections in Poland and the Polish Secret Police still terrorised the opposition parties and at the same time Warsaw's military attaché was running around London telling the British that they should hand over Spitfires and warships as 'a gesture of good faith'. Needless to say this appeal was not met with open arms. Particularly revealing is a draft text from the FO to the Admiralty from March of 1946:

"It seems to us that our best policy may well now prove to be to stall on the whole question of the

return of any naval units until such time as the present provisional government is replaced by a more permanent administration as the result of elections in Poland when we might hope to secure a reasonable agreement with better hopes of it being carried out." [26]

This paragraph was removed from the text that was sent, but its meaning was clear, echoed as it was by Hankey of the FO in May, 1946: "Personally I wouldn't give Warsaw anything till they hold elections". [27]

The Admiralty did not dispute the return of the warships that the Polish forces had brought with them, ships like the Błyskawica and Burza which had been in the Polish Navy before 1939. Other ships had been given to Poland by the Royal Navy; the Conrad and the Krakowiak had been HMS Danae and HMS Silverton respectively. Whereas the Warsaw Poles took the line that they were morally entitled to these ships - the Admiralty, not surprisingly, opposed this view. More than this, the Admiralty were not prepared to hand over its newest equipment to the Communists, the old Polish ships had been extensively refitted since 1939 and it was decided that when the Błyskawica did go back to Poland it would be stripped back down to 1939 standard - another clear example, according to Kuropieska, of more bad faith from London. [28]

The autumn of 1946 brought a fresh wave of protest and counter-protest over the issue of Polish citizenship and the call to join the Resettlement Corps. Kuropieska highlighted the options open to Warsaw in his memo of

August 8th, 1946. The first option was to protest over the creation of the PRC and to threaten to withdraw the citizenship of any Pole who joined the Corps and at the same time to be ready for a mass rise in repatriation. The other option was to go along with the idea of the Resettlement Corps as the best solution for its citizens and to try to influence the structure. By maintaining good relations with the British the Poles would then have a claim after two years to the technical material used in the PRC, the Poles would receive the best possible training and education and the Embassy could make sure that the Poles were not exploited or used for dangerous or degrading work. The first option would, according to Kuropieska, fall into the hands of the British who would like nothing more than to get rid of the Poles with the least possible expense. The second option was certainly the most favourable as regards the treatment of the Polish troops. The British had given very little thought to what would happen if the Poles stayed in the UK; someone had to influence the organisation of the Corps and by showing a kind face to the Polish troops and by demonstrating that after two years the Poles would still be welcome in their own country the troops would go back, and they would go back trained and skilled at British expense. By careful use of propaganda the Warsaw Poles could show the world and the Polish Forces that they were interested in the well being of the individual and the

well being of Poland, rather than just starting a third world war as the exiles seemed to be. The political leaders in Warsaw chose the first option and Kuropieska, then a devout Party member, says he also favoured this first option of protest at the time. Writing many years later he admits that Warsaw should have chosen the second option and it was an opportunity that was missed. The bad faith he accused the British of at the time was over-stated if not completely wrong. [29]

The propaganda machine of the Provisional Government swung into action, threatening to deprive any Pole of his citizenship for joining the PRC.

Marshal Rola-Zymierski declared that:

"The Polish Armed Forces, remaining to this point under British command, will be demobilised and in their place there will be created - without asking the opinion of the Government of National Unity - the so called 'Polish Resettlement Corps' which will be a unit of the British Army. Former Polish soldiers will be treated as citizens without Government and without a country. [...]

I remind everyone that the honour of the Polish soldier will not allow a Pole to serve under a standard that is not red and white when his country needs him and call for his return home." [30]

The threat of loss of citizenship was announced by Warsaw Radio on the 12th September, 1946, in another speech by Rola-Zymierski:

"In accordance with the Law on Polish Nationality of 1929 entry into foreign military service without the consent of the Polish Government renders the offender liable to loss of citizenship. On behalf of the Government of National Unity I want to warn you, soldiers, that entry in to the resettlement corps exposes you to the danger of losing your rights as citizens and, following from this, of losing the possibility of returning home." [31]

The move was widely reported by the British press at the time. As already mentioned certain British newspapers were hostile to the Polish forces and their treatment of certain issues was questionable to say the least. Even Hankey compared the wording of the above statement with the way it was treated in "The Times" of the 16th September. Although Warsaw had only said that the Poles **could** lose their citizenship but it was reported that they **would** lose it. The implication being - go home before it's too late.

The threat of losing their nationality and with it the right to return to Poland was taken very seriously by many Poles - just as it was intended - and many of the senior officers did their best to allay these fears. Maj-Gen. Macleod of the PRC Advisory Staff wrote to Hankey with a paraphrase of General Anders' view on the situation:

"Don't worry, a lot of us won't go back to Poland anyway if this Government is in Power, and if another Government comes into Power under which we may be willing to live in Poland, that Government would be almost certain to revoke the decree withdrawing your nationality." [32]

Warsaw's men were going around telling the Polish Forces in Britain not to join the PRC while knowing full well that the Poles were apprehensive about returning to Poland. The mental anguish that they created was immense and the bad feeling they created in Whitehall was also very strong. Both the FO and the WO had invested a great

deal of time in creating the Resettlement Corps only to see it threatened at birth by Warsaw's latest policy decision.

Linowski in "Trudne Powroty" states:

"Of course the aim of Polish policy was not to make life difficult for the British authorities but rather to find a solution that was most advantageous for their particular point of view. This is something the British did not want to understand."
[33]

It is doubtful that the corridors of the Foreign Office reverberated with praise for how reasonable the Warsaw Poles were being and as to their 'particular point of view' it was still an open question as to which, if any, soldiers were wanted back in Poland.

In private and public conversation the Communist representatives could appear to be very reasonable. The following minutes were noted in a London meeting between Grosz and Cripps, with Retinger in attendance:

Grosz to Cripps: "Furthermore these people have done nothing wrong against Poland. On the contrary, they are returning covered with the glory of fighting the Germans, so what possible harm is going to come to them?
[He then mentions the AK; that they have been recognised and are working with the full confidence of the authorities.]

Retinger: Not all of them - far from all of them.

Grosz (Categorically): All of them that don't have Polish blood on their hands." [34]

This left the door open for Warsaw to refuse to accept back any group of soldiers it did not want back. The question of the Volksliste was one that vexed many a

repatriation officer. Whilst some officers like Kuropieska did their best to get all the Poles back to Poland - even those who had been on the Volksliste, his equivalent in Rome, Colonel Sidor, did the opposite. In his 1947 book he wrote about the Second Corps continuing the argument that Anders' Army were all fascists and collaborators:

"The 2nd Corps marched into Italy with 50,000 people. In action - through death and injury - it was reduced to 15,000. When the 2nd Corps was evacuated to England it numbered 110,000 people, not counting paramilitary auxiliaries. Where did these "Soldiers" come from?" [35]

Putting aside the inaccuracy of Sidor's calculation he answers his own question by saying that most came from the German Army and war criminals from the SS, the Gestapo, from the Russian 'Vlasov' Army and from Lithuanian collaborators. Although there is some truth that a small number of criminals did escape justice by claiming to be Poles this was largely as a result of poor Allied screening than to a Polish desire to fill its ranks with Nazis. Nevertheless Warsaw felt obliged to point out the groups of soldiers that it did not want to see in Poland. Cavendish-Bentinck ciphered the Foreign Office in March, 1946, with news that Poland:

"Would not receive back in Poland persons who were on the first and second categories of German Volksliste (i.e. Reichsdeutsche and persons of acknowledged German Race living in Poland before 1939), individuals who had been members of S.S. formations or Vassor [sic] Army, Ukrainians and all persons who had been on the staff of the Polish Deuxième Bureau (STS and SOE) [Special Training School and Special Operations Executive]"

Three days after Gomułka's speech, Zygmunt Modzelewski, the Vice—Minister for Foreign Affairs, added to this that former members of the Nazi SA were also excluded "and persons who had publicly conducted propaganda against the present Government." [36]

This last, retrospective, category could, given ill will from Warsaw, be used to persecute repatriates. General Anders was under no illusions what awaited the Polish soldier who returned home and he warned them to that effect:

"They will attempt to destroy our Armed Forces. We shall all be exposed to their cunning agitation. They will call for our return to our country, but we know only too well how that would end. They will look among Polish soldiers for men of weak resolution. Their work will be easier as a result of the withdrawal of the recognition of the lawful Government of the Polish Republic, since the Polish authorities have been deprived of the means of information, even in the form of radio broadcasts from London, which broadcasts have now ceased to serve the cause of Poland.

I do not doubt for a moment that the men of the II Polish Corps, who know why and for what Poland has been fighting for so long, will withstand all hostile attempts." [37]

The Repatriation Missions expended much effort to counter such ideas. Among the troops they had their work cut out but among the masses of Displaced Persons in Germany and Austria there was more fertile ground in which to work. Many of the Poles who had been moved west by the Germans to work in German industry had been put on the Volksliste - most often through no choice of their own - and now felt apprehensive about returning to Poland. Since Poland

needed their labour they were to be encouraged to return. The Polish Repatriation Mission at Graz—Klagenfurt broadcast to the DPs in 1946:

"Recently the verification undertaken by Polish liaison officers at the request of the British authorities in certain Polish centres has led to a spread of rumours by some people, interested in covering up their 'Volksliste' past and the fact that they have no right to be DPs. The rumours say that this verification is the first step to forced repatriation. We point out that according to international principles no one will be forced to return if they are confirmed by this verification to be Poles. Poland does not need elements who do not want to be there and work there. Similarly we need not add that Poland does not go through the trouble of repatriation simply to send its citizens to another country, to imprison them or to persecute them. Land, workshops, factories and institutions are waiting for you. The Polish Repatriation Mission has no intention of forcing anyone to return. On the contrary we refuse the right to return to anyone who by collaborating with the Germans or by obtaining German citizenship have lost the right to be Poles. Do not believe the rumours that are being spread about by people who have themselves nothing to lose and try to tie their fate to yours - who try to create a rift between yourselves and the homeland." [38]

The message was that the Poles had no fear in returning and that all statements to the contrary were, as Kuropieska called them, the "vile insinuations" [39] of reactionaries who wanted to harm the interests of the new regime.

The idea that the Provisional Government did not want mass repatriation would not go away. Even in the autumn of 1945 Retinger - a friend of Warsaw - had come to that very conclusion in talks with Warner, then head of the FO's Northern Department, and whose words were reported to the Polish Armed Forces Committee:

"Dr R. has come to the conclusion that the Polish Government did not want the bulk of the Polish forces under our command to return before the winter. Not only would they starve if they went back in large numbers now, but also on political grounds. Warsaw would prefer to take only picked officers and specialists at the present stage. Moreover, they had now "realised that the great majority of volunteers for repatriation in this country were "Volksdeutsche". (In point of fact, the majority of the volunteers are Poles who came over from or were captured with the Germans. One would have thought that if they were Volksdeutsche they would not be keen to return to Poland in present circumstances and it seems not unlikely that the Warsaw authorities are applying this term to them as providing a more respectable excuse for refusing to accept them.)" [40]

This flew in the face of everything the military attache was trying to achieve in London.

Kuropieska highlights the case of one sergeant who had been an NCO in the German Army but had deserted to the Poles, bringing with him a complete radio station. He had fought well in the Polish Army and had been decorated for his efforts yet he had heard from Poland that his wife had been interned in a camp for Volksdeutsche; this was hardly news to encourage soldiers to return. Kuropieska contacted Modzelewski to ask for her release and for her to write to her husband when she was free. The letter was sent from Poland by diplomatic courier as a demonstration that the ex-Wehrmacht would have nothing to fear. The colonel also made sure that everyone knew what had happened because, as he says, there was little point hiding this particular light under a bushel. The troops had to know. [41]

There was a smaller but perhaps more influential

group of Polish soldiers who were earmarked for particularly vitriolic denunciation - the generals, and none more so than General Anders. An article in "Życie Warszawy" is typical of this vilification campaign:

"We do not want people in our country who, for their own ambition and to preserve their privilege, are ready to betray not only the lives of their own people but the interests of their country. Anders has compromised himself just as those who supported him are compromised." [42]

According to a United Press article in August, 1946, Anders had no intention of leaving Italy. According to 'Warsaw' Polish sources in the USA, the General had accumulated a fortune of some \$200,000 US and had bought himself a luxury villa where, after leaving the Army, he would live the life of a 'bon viveur'. This was repeated in the "Espresso" and "Il Momento" in Italy. [43] True or not, such stories were believed.

The "Osadnik na Ziemiach Odzyskanych", a fortnightly paper published in Warsaw was even more specific in its attack on the old order of Poland:

"...the emigration of the Polish intelligentsia to do hard manual work abroad is some act of madness; some political revenge by the Potockis, the Anders, the Sosnkowskis and all the other former landowners who, today, have lost their estates in Poland to the peasants. They have set themselves up quite comfortably abroad. Anders has an estate in Ireland, Potocki in South America, Sosnkowski near Montreal. Such people we can understand, but why does an artist; why does an engineer; why does a lawyer go to Canada to work for some farmer or in the forest or on the railways? [...]
One day they will stop being white slaves on whose backs the politically and morally bankrupt are making interest and they too will find the shortest route home." [44]

Of the 181 Polish generals who ended the war in the West (including senior commanders later promoted by the Government-in-Exile) only 11 returned to Poland. [45]

The generals were not welcome back in Poland and Kuropieska told the former GOC Polish Parachute Brigade, General Sosabowski, as much when they met. He was told that many officers had evaded capture during the war and found themselves in the West, yet had received no command. The situation in Poland was much the same - the Polish Armed Forces had too many senior officers and there would be no place for those in the West. According to the General, Kuropieska said this:

"...in a serious tone that was not meant to offend, as he was merely trying to prove that on active service in the present reality as existed in Poland, even if we did decide to return to Poland, there would be no place for us." [46]

Some senior officers did find a role in Poland, however briefly. Paszkiewicz became the Commander of the Warsaw Military District, Colonel Mossor became the head of the Kraków District, General Szarecki became head of the Polish Medical Corps, Lt-Colonel Stefan Ścibor became the Second in Command of a bomber squadron in Łódź. Colonel Jerzy Kirchmayer returned to Poland to join the Army, eventually to be promoted to General. This was also the case with Colonel Franciszek Skibiński, former CO of the 10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade of the 1st (Polish) Armoured Division. That is not to say that General Anders' words did not come true for many of

the returned senior officers

The 'Trial of the Generals' that took place in August, 1950 and the following year rocked the Polish military establishment. The process of Polish Stalinisation led to the arrest of many of those who returned to Poland. General Tatar, Colonels Mossor, Kirchmayer, Skibiński and even Kuropieska found themselves in the dock on espionage and conspiracy charges with 129 other Polish officers. As well as long prison sentences there were nineteen executions handed out. Even those who might be regarded as loyal to the regime fell victim to the process - Marian Spychalski was imprisoned in 1950 and three years later Marshal Żymierski met the same fate. Although in 1956 Gomułka rehabilitated those who fell victim to the regime (he too had fallen from grace in 1948), for many it was too late. [47]

Some Poles, for the good of the country, were prepared to go home whatever the reaction of the regime. Poland needed Poles and that was an end to the matter. Tadeusz Kochanowicz explained why he returned to Poland:

"...I considered that as many Poles as possible should return to Poland, with the exception of those who might return in order to continue the fight against the new political system. Ruined by war and by the occupation, Poland needed people to work. Abroad there were many qualified people. No doubt they would be useful in reconstruction. A return of the greatest number of people of goodwill, politicians included, regardless of the the economic conditions at home, would, in my opinion, go a long way to calm things down in Poland." [48]

There was hardly a soldier who did not feel the urge to return to Poland and to help in the rebuilding of the country. General Machalski, although he wanted to go back, would not under any circumstances.

"I considered it was our duty to return to Poland in closed ranks, with standards unfurled and with our arms in our hands to join with our brothers who conquered Berlin and hoisted the Polish flag on the ruins of the Reichstag. Although I did think to myself that there would be problems after Anders brought our Army out of the USSR and the Sikorski-Maiski agreement broke down, the other side was not blameless. Instead of holding out their hand to us and welcoming us back in the country with bread and salt and with showers of flowers they demanded we lay down our weapons, take off our uniforms and return on consular passports. They threatened us with court processes and prisons. Having a clear conscience I had no intention of justifying myself before any procurator or to suffer for something I had not done. It did not appeal to me that I should be tolerated as a second class citizen in my own country to be maltreated and humiliated. I decided to stay abroad where I would not have to be ashamed to work as an unskilled labourer of the lowest order. I could not entertain the idea that in my own country I should have to clean streets while others, less deserving, run around in cars. I did not return to Poland, not because I did not want to return but because the authorities in the country didn't want me." [49]

The argument that it was better to be poor in Britain than in the Poles' own country was scorned by the officers trying to encourage repatriation. Kuropieska told many men that given the choice it was always better that they should break rocks on Polish roads rather than British ones. [50] Colonel Sidor was equally critical of the view that men like Machalski took. He wrote:

"Anders preferred to use Polish officers and soldiers to dig English potatoes; to clear the rubble of London and to locate land-mines on the beaches of Great Britain rather than allow them to return to their families and help rebuild their own country." [51]

Many thousands of Poles agreed with the view that they had to get home. As Jerzy Potocki writes, nostalgia had been eating at the troops for years but fear was the best incentive to return. Although there was a mass of propaganda telling the Poles that they should fear the Communists, many thousand feared life as an exile more. They feared the sort of manual work that they would have to do - they were qualified to do little else and they feared the xenophobia of the local population; it was the fear of dying abroad that drove many to return. [52] Many Poles were prepared to defy the propaganda; as one Polish newspaper wrote:

"Rome. 10.1.[1946] (Polish Press Agency) On the 8th of this month in Cinecitta camp near Rome Major Stefan Count Tyszkiewicz, former director of Anders' Red Cross, arrived for a visit accompanied by several other people - supposedly under the pretext of giving assistance to the repatriates staying in the camp.

Anders' emissaries began to campaign against returning to Poland however the mass of indignant repatriates gave them the response they so deserved. Amid cries of "You are not Poles! You have no right to do this!" the repatriates made moves to lynch Anders' representatives and to demolish their car. The Count was only saved by the energetic intervention of the officers of the Polish Repatriation Mission who prevented a kangaroo court and managed to calm the angry crowd. To shouts of "We don't want your thieves money! Murderers! You're killing hundreds of people in Poland!" and "Anders' outcasts!" the car left the camp." [53]

As well as not wanting to be exiles many Poles were tempted by the offers put forward by repatriation officers and the State Directorate for Repatriation [PUR]. One soldier was told that he would not have to work but would receive a government grant for further and higher education. He would get accommodation and furniture from PUR in Poland, more so since he was going to the 'recovered territories'. As the son of a worker he would get priority in education and if he wanted to work he would find it straight away. Because the Germans had killed so many of the Polish intelligentsia he was told the country needed his humble qualifications more than ever. Although his friends sneered with cynical disbelief it did seem a tempting prospect and Wacławski returned to Poland on the 8th November, 1948. [54]

The PUR budget for propaganda to the West in 1947 was ZŁ 17,700,000 and was necessarily higher than the budget to the East; the Poles in the Soviet Union needed less encouragement to return home. [55] The Polish (Warsaw) Ministry of Information and Propaganda also did its best to get the regime's message across. Wojciech Albrycht, Director of the Information Ministry's Foreign Department, reported on the propaganda tools sent from Poland in November, 1945, alone in "an action to combat the political narrowmindedness of the II Corps": [56]

PROPAGANDA TOOLS SENT TO UK FOR NOVEMBER 1945.

	<u>Embassy In London</u>	<u>Military Attache</u>	<u>Other Polish Bodies</u>	<u>Worldwide Figure</u>
<u>Periodicals</u>	300	420	1,290	159,453
<u>Weeklies</u>	168	275	772	34,527
<u>Illustrated Magazines...</u>				
<u>...in Polish</u>	3	-	7	1,827
<u>...in English</u>	1,253	-	25	6,092
<u>Statistical Reports</u>	10	-	17	134
<u>Brochures</u>	82	-	235	10,662
<u>Posters</u>	30	-	8	1,124
<u>Prospectuses</u>	3	-	3	1,787
<u>Photos</u>	50	-	15	445
<u>National Symbols</u>	1	-	1	83
<u>Portraits</u>	3	-	6	132
<u>Maps of Poland</u>	2	-	4	71
<u>Albums</u>	-	-	1	15
<u>Maps of Death Camps</u>	-	-	1	3
<u>Articles</u>	-	-	-	2
<u>Films</u>	-	-	-	18
<u>Gramophone Records (sets)</u>	-	-	-	1

.

The need to inform Poles of what was happening in Poland was important given the large number of them abroad. In the British Zone of Germany, occupied by 30 Corps, the Chief of the Polish Repatriation Mission, Major Starzec, presented a report on the number of Poles in the area:

27th March, 1946

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>CAMPS</u>	<u>DPS</u>	<u>PWX</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> (British (Polish Figures) Figures)	
5 DIV.	Braunschweig	178	51,811	10,247	62,058	62,550
1 (Pol) DIV.	Meppen	30	21,069	4,048	25,117	24,586
43 DIV.	Celle	10	24,579	1,640	--	26,219
51 DIV.	Syke	23	24,957	3,355	28,312	--
3 (Can) DIV.	Oldenburg	7	1,052	1,301	1,353	--
75 AA BRIG.	Osnabruck	2	5,883	798	6,681	--

[57]

There were no exact figures as to the number of Poles in the 30 Corps Area, the British Authorities and Polish Mission counted differently, but there were some 148,441 to 171,673 civilian DPS and 23,232 former prisoners of war (PWX) held in 250 camps.

Even with all the goodwill in the world the Polish Missions were fighting an uphill battle to get their message across to the Poles. Their biggest complaint was the 'hermetic' nature of the Polish camps, sealed off as they were by officers loyal to the Poles in London. If the Warsaw Poles could not get their message across then the obvious outcome would be a mass of rumours, all of them negative.

The Mission to 30 Corps reported regularly to Warsaw. The report from the 13th March, 1946, complained that the area controlled by the 1st (Polish) Armd Div. was the most difficult to work in. Polish officers would go around trying to discourage DPs from returning to Poland. Capt. Sobański was quoted as telling DPs that a group of repatriates going to Lübeck had been detoured into wooded ground and robbed by the British escort. Lt. Piotrowski had spread the rumour that three children had died on one transport as no food had been given for three days. By such use of exaggeration and misinformation the seeds of doubt were sown in the minds of possible volunteers for return. [58]

The April 1st, 1946, report noted that rumours were spreading about the fate of repatriates from Poznań and Pomorze who, it was said, were being sent to Siberia directly on arriving in Poland. All the repatriates were being forced to join the PPR and anyone who had been in Germany after 1943 was being arrested; this particularly affected many of the civilian DPs. Relations with the Soviet Union were also another source of rumour for the future. Any hold up in a transport was taken to be a sign of the imminent start of war, any Pole married to a 'Soviet Citizen' - by Moscow's definition anyone who had lived east of the Curzon Line in 1939 - would be

separated from their partners who would then be deported east. [59]

The Polish Mission had the problem that it was treated as a pariah by the London Poles who would have nothing to do with its members. The 1st March, 1946, report to Warsaw complained that the commander of the Władysław Jagiełło Camp in Braunschweig, 2nd Lt. Zastawnik, had told Warsaw's representative that he did not recognise the office of the Mission and would do nothing to assist them. In the 1st Division's town of Maczków posters began to appear about the Warsaw Liaison Officer - Capt. Kukla - saying that he "Will give morning lessons in his mother tongue - Russian." [60] When Kukla was recalled to Warsaw at the end of March the situation was becoming critical. Major Starzec sent another report to Warsaw in April, 1946.:

"The region in which we have the least control is the area held by the 1st Polish Armoured Division where, temporarily, we have no liaison officer. The matter of sending one of our representatives to that area has now become urgent. In the near future the Division is awaiting demobilisation and it is essential that our liaison officer starts work there as soon as possible. On the basis of personal contacts with many soldiers and officers (particularly the younger ones) it must be said that the majority would like to return to Poland but would prefer to be demobilised first or they would like to return as organised military units." [61]

If the Military Mission in Germany felt aggrieved at the apparent ill will of the Poles in the 1st Armoured

Division this was nothing to the problems they felt they were facing from the British trying to get these very same Poles back to Poland. The Head of Mission in Bad Salzuflen wrote to the Chief of the Polish Mission in Berlin, Dr Jakub Prawin, on the 3rd May, 1945, to complain about the British attitude:

"Despite the apparent good will of Brig. Carthew and Col. Ross from the Allied Liaison Office, to this date, it has been impossible to reach a decision regarding the organisation of a separate transport for the 1st Armd. Div.

The British transport authorities are hiding behind apparent technical difficulties; a lack of available space at Quackenbruck and Lubeck Camps (current capacity being 400) as well as the necessity to use the transport for economic purposes. To date the question of separate transport lies on dead ground

The British authorities have several times underlined that unless the position of the Polish authorities undergoes some considerable change there will be a serious delay in the repatriation of 1st Armd. Div. Personally I can't see why the British are making such problems with the transport. It appears to be an unwillingness to take certain new steps and to put in the necessary investment (to enlarge transit camps, etc.) as well as trying to force us to take the soldiers of the 1st Armd. Div. out of this area as quickly as possible." [62]

The problems with moving elements of the 1st Armoured Division to Poland were not resolved until May of 1947. Whereas the Warsaw Poles blamed the British for the delay the British thought the fault lay in the Warsaw Poles who seemed constantly to put up new obstacles. The minutes of a meeting at Lancaster House in Berlin, the Headquarters of the Control Commission Germany (British Element) [CCG (BE)], show that even the first transport that was due to leave on May 1st was held

up at the last minute by the Warsaw Poles demanding an extra level of screening. Repatriates were first screened at Divisional Headquarters in Meppen, then moved to Quakenbrück Camp before being moved by train to Stettin in parties of 400. They were to be kept separate from DPs and PWX. The Polish Mission demanded a secondary stage of screening at Lübeck. General Westrop, Chief of the Combined Services Division, who chaired the meeting found it difficult to work out just why the Poles were demanding this new move but agreed if the Poles would promise to keep procedures to a minimum. [63]

The people who suffered the most due to this mutual recrimination were the Polish soldiers who, by 1947, had spent two years with an uncertain view of the future. Seemingly the officers of the Bad Salzungen Mission were positive towards repatriation. In May, 1945, the Acting Head of Mission wrote to Prawin in Berlin with his worries:

"Due to the protracted delay in the matter of repatriation I have noticed a decided change of mood in the area of the 1st Armd. Div. Those who have declared themselves for repatriation have to wait a long time for transport (2-3 Months). In many cases the soldiers have been subject to all manner of unpleasantness. Elements hostile to us have tried to lay the blame for the delay in repatriation on the Polish authorities - this has started various types of rumours. I have taken every step, by my contacts with officers, to counter these rumours and to explain the situation as it is. I maintain, however, that the question of repatriation needs to be moved along with all possible speed." [64]

Although this report seems sincere enough the question of repatriation was not 'moved along with all possible

speed'. Almost exactly two years after the above report the first transport was ready to go. Captain Bojenko of the Meppen Consulate reported the particulars the day after the 13th of May move. The numbers to return to Poland in the transport were 399 soldiers and 37 dependants (although 12 pulled out at the last minute for various reason). Each soldier received four days' personal ration and seven days' ration per man was also loaded on the train; they were entitled to carry 150 Kgs luggage each - this amounted to 60 tons which filled three and a half railway wagons with another being taken up with food. The troops themselves were loaded in twelve carriages. Although the transport was somewhat crowded and the train had not been disinfected since the last DP transport there were few complaints from the Poles.

"The mood among the soldiers was good, cheerful. They were happy. I gave out newspapers to the departing soldiers. From the British authorities some Captain turned up towards the end but he didn't seem to be interested in very much. From the Division - General Rudnicki was there. He talked to groups of the soldiers asking them if they had received everything that was due to them. I can't say that he showed any signs of a heartfelt farewell. There were no speeches." [65]

General Rudnicki's attitude seemed to confirm the faith that was put in him by the War Office and bore out General Sir Ivor Thomas' view: "I have no fears at all as to what will come from Germany - I know Rudnicki will play the game in a way Anders never did." [66]

On the 1st May, 1947, the 1st (Polish) Armoured Division was removed from the BAOR ready for

demobilisation, its place being taken by the British 7th Armoured Div. As the Warsaw Liaison officers began to be withdrawn they produced closing reports on their activity in Germany. As the Consulate in Meppen was closing Major Jankowski wrote to Warsaw with a situation report praising the men of the Division for a very positive attitude towards the 'new' Poland. In particular the Division's Chief of Staff, Colonel Stankiewicz, and the Divisional Quartermaster, Major Micha, were mentioned for being more than helpful. Despite the efforts of well meaning officers on both sides of the political divide the troops were still not happy. Jankowski reported that there were many complaints that they were being kept in the dark and had been denied the triumphant return to Poland that they had been waiting for - they claimed that if General Maczek had still been in command of the Division then things would have been different. Rudnicki, who had spent the war in Italy, had never gained the popularity of Maczek with the men in Germany, and shows that Maczek's removal to head the new 1st Polish Corps was a move welcomed by Warsaw.

The repatriation rate of the Division was quite high, especially compared to front-line units in the 2nd Corps. The Jankowski report, written in November, 1947, records that in the Summer of 1946 some 1,500 soldiers returned home and then from May to October, 1947, a further 5,453 soldiers and 1,257 dependents returned. He

added that many Poles returned to Poland after the unit had been shipped to the UK so that in the end only 40% of the Division did not end up in Poland - and this considering that 65% of the Division's manpower were Class 3 Volksdeutsche from Silesia, Pomerania and Wielkopolska. As to the claim that Warsaw did not want Polish soldiers to return, Jankowski points out that the Government had only refused three applications from the Division - two Class 2 Volksdeutsche collaborators and a Ukrainian. The Consulate in Meppen had refused two - a German and a Ukrainian. There were, at the time the report was written, still 42 cases where a decision had yet to be reached. [67]

Whereas the Polish Mission to 30 Corps did not alienate its British host to any great extent the communist-backed Polish Mission in Berlin seemed to do little else.

As Berlin was being divided after the war the Poles, recognised as being in the Soviet 'sphere of influence' had been assigned property in the Soviet Zone. The Poles protested and appealed directly to the British Military Government in Berlin who had then given them an empty block of flats at 42 Schlutterstrasse - much to the annoyance of the Foreign Office and CCG (BE). The Poles set up shop in the British Zone, originally claiming that they would get provisions directly from Poland - this was a claim that was not believed by the British who assumed they must be "...scrounging right and left and obtaining

provender by the usual surreptitious Polish methods."

[68] The FO was right in its assessment of the situation. The Poles who now had a foot-hold in the British Zone then appealed to them for supplies. The British refused on the grounds that the Poles should be in the Soviet Zone where they were guaranteed provisions - if the Poles didn't like it then they should leave, and the FO encouraged the Poles to do just that. Cavendish-Bentinck did put a proposition forward that it might have been prudent to feed the Poles:

"Whilst I have no doubt that it would be tiresome for us to provide rations for [the] Polish Military Mission in Berlin, and I expect they are probably irritating people much given to complaint, nevertheless it may be a good investment to have these people dependent on us for their daily bread."
[69]

This view did not gain much popularity especially when the Poles began to push their luck and asked the British for a villa for official use. The Warsaw Foreign Ministry requested that the British Military Government provide a villa with reception rooms, quarters for the Mission members, rations on the same scale and permission to employ staff. The CCG were unimpressed and told the ambassador in Warsaw that the position had not changed. Since the Poles were effectively only squatters in their current building and since there was a great deal of demand for property in Berlin it was suggested that the Poles would do better not to draw attention to themselves as they might lose the building altogether. [70] This

seemed to put an end to the matter.

The Polish Mission in Germany consisted of 233 people: 104 in the British Zone; 54 in the Soviet Zone; 48 in the US Zone and 27 in the French Zone. [71] Their effectiveness was questioned by Cecil King of the CCG (BE) Main HQ's Political Division in a letter to the BAOR Advanced HQ in Berlin:

"...there seems no doubt that the Mission are a poor lot, and Ross' [Allied Liaison Branch] view that they hinder rather than encourage repatriation is also held by our people 'on the ground'..." [72]

The Military did not need convincing about the Poles. In a report about Warsaw's Liaison Officers [LOs] by 13 Area Security Office in Schleswig-Holstein another complaint was made about the Poles.

"HQ Mil. Gov. (DP/PWX) 8 Corps District agree that so far from being of assistance these LOs have been a sheer nuisance; they have fulfilled no useful function and have wasted the time of FS [Field Security] NCOs who have been obliged to investigate their activities." [73]

Lt. Kossobudzki was suspected of espionage, Lt. Gawron was also suspected of espionage and of drug smuggling. Lt. Sukowski was under observation for sending non-censored mail, as was 2nd Lt. Miernik who was also under suspicion of currency irregularities.

Even if the personalities were of questioned value the machinery of repatriation was formidable. PUR in Germany had four ships at its disposal - the SS Rotenfels that carried 1,300 people, SS Spree for 650, SS Poseidon for 800 and the SS Izar with a 3,000 capacity that

replaced the SS Fischer which was withdrawn after PUR complaints about cockroach infestation and leaks in the hull. [74]

As well as the four ships to take the DPs back from Germany arrangements had to be made for transport by sea from Britain and overland from the rest of Europe. Dr Przewanski, the Consul General in London, wrote a report to PUR:

"As per my earlier communication - there was a Conference today in the Consulate between Consular representatives, the military attache, the War Office and the Foreign Office to try to facilitate the repatriation of the Army by land. The following was decided: The 'Eastern Prince' will take about 1,500 on the 24th November [1947] and the rest we will send by rail - that is to say about 1,000 soldiers who are currently waiting and declared themselves later. With regards to rail transport we set down the following conditions: 1/ During transport, all the way to the Polish frontier, food is to be provided. 2/ Adequate protection is to be provided. 3/ The journey will be made without changing trains. 4/ The repatriates are to be delivered to our border crossing at Dziedzice. As it transpires, all of this is within the competence of the War Office which would have to take responsibility for the planning - knowing that they would have to provide passenger wagons for this. I also brought up the question of the 5 invalids who have died while waiting for repatriation. I asked for better conditions for the invalids and sick soldiers. For the Foreign Office the talks were led by Hancock, for the War Office - Col. Telfer. From the military attache's office there was Col. Chojewski. There were also several advisors to both sides present. After the Conference I invited everyone for tea and cocktails where conversation about work was avoided." [75]

The return by sea had been an available option almost as soon as hostilities had ended. In November, 1945, at a Cabinet meeting it was...

"(1) Agreed that, subject to satisfactory assurances from the Admiralty about the safety of this route, the Foreign Secretary should inform the Polish Provisional Government that transport could be made available to repatriate by sea the 23,000 members of the Polish Armed Forces who had expressed a wish to return to Poland." [76]

Once the security aspect - namely the disposal of sea mines in Gdynia - had been cleared up, the British designated four ships to run the round trip to Poland. In May, 1946, for example, The 'Eastern Prince' sailed on the 6th with 1,507 people, including 348 dependants; on the 9th the 'Medina Victory' sailed with 1,300; on the 12th the 'Clan Lamont' sailed with 1,410; on the 17th the 'Marine Raven' sailed with 1,994. Each ship off-loaded in Poland and sailed back to Britain to be ready for its next trip. By the 24th of May the 'Eastern Prince' was ready for its second trip of the month, the 'Medina Victory' sailed again on the 27th, the Clan Lamont on the 30th and the Marine Raven on the 4th of June and so on. [77]

The repatriations, once the teething troubles had been sorted out, went smoothly but the biggest apprehension most of the troops had was the kind of reception that awaited them in Poland. Those who were not going back had told them to expect the worst. One repatriate says that as his repatriation ship reached Poland it was approached by a motor launch with armed guards.

"The expression on their faces was, to say the least, indifferent. Was this an omen, a foretaste of

what the reactionary propaganda had warned us about - a welcome by the UB and then the labour camps? We fell silent and our good humour left us.

The ship slowly approached the jetty. It appeared that 'they' were right. On the jetty, every few metres, soldiers with machine guns were lined up in rows. The ship was in total silence." [78]

As it turned out Sgt. Mrowiec had little to worry about and after a short stay in a transit camp in Wrzeszcz was soon in Silesia with his family.

As well as repatriates being apprehensive about the reception there were also complaints from the Ministry of Information and Propaganda in Warsaw that the whole repatriation was badly organised - with time the situation got worse.

In a series of reports by Każimiera Ostrowska of the Ministry to her Head Office in Warsaw she traced with growing desperation how badly the authorities were organising the receptions.

Report #8, dated 20th January, 1946, covered the 'Baufora's' arrival in Poland with 17 officers and 1,981 other ranks:

"The ship sailed into port to the sound of the national anthem played by the Army Orchestra from Wrzeszcz. The soldiers returning to their country were welcomed by representatives of the military authorities - Col. Sokołowski at the head, and by members of the civil authorities. As the ship moored there were many moving scenes: One of the women standing on the quay recognised her husband among a group of soldiers standing on the upper decks - another recognised her son and others recognised friends and relatives. The enthusiastic welcome given to these soldiers returning from their wanderings was returned by a rain of chocolates, cigarettes and sweets that poured onto the heads of the waiting public.

After the gangway was lowered the officer in

command of the transport - Col. Perko - stepped ashore to be greeted with flowers and a kiss from a group of ladies standing on the quay.

The unloading of the ship was carried out most efficiently. The soldiers made their way to the parade ground of the Słowacki Street barracks where the official part of the welcome was to take place.

After a series of long speeches it was possible to observe that the soldiers looked decidedly disheartened. Little wonder as they were tired, hungry and cold. They were only dismissed at dusk when they retired to the barracks.

On the ship I talked to some of the repatriates. On the whole most are pleased to be back in their country. Life over there [Britain] is hard. Home-sickness and inactivity are convincing more and more to return. They find British attitudes towards the Poles discouraging - this feeling is most pronounced in those who declare themselves for repatriation home." [79]

By report #32, March 1946, the Ministry representative was commenting that the reception committee for the 'Clan Lamont' turned up late. When the Head of Department, Irena Ostoja-Ostojaska, went to see the 'Sobieski's' first return to Poland since 1939 she too was critical of the authorities. As the 'Sobieski' returned with 15 officers and 2,003 other ranks on the 25th March, 1946, there was no welcoming Committee at all. The families of the repatriates were not allowed on to the quay - some managed to break through the cordon and were also showered with a hail of chocolates, oranges and cigarettes. Families of the ship's crew were taken on board and fed with oranges and bananas. The biggest complaint from the people on board was that there was no official welcome. "Didn't you know we were coming?" was one question frequently asked. The conclusion of

Ostoja-Ostojaska was: "It does not serve us well in propaganda terms." [80]

Kaźmiera Ostrowska's report #35, 25th April, 1946, relates to a further trip by the 'Sobieski' with 947 troops from Italy (including 5 officers) and 1,032 troops from the UK (with 5 officers including General Ferek-Błeszyński). As the ship had been given a formal send off in Britain the Poles were most surprised to find that in Poland there was no orchestra and no honour guard to meet them. Even the British Consul commented that the whole affair showed a lack of organisation and general disinterest in the returning Polish troops. [81]

Her report #36, in May, covering the next return of the ship was even more critical. The port had been sealed off to the general public by port guards, border police and security staff employed by Gdynia-American Shipping Lines. Plinius, the director of the line, said that no one, not even crew families would be allowed on board (this was due to a string of thefts during previous visits). The crew met and told the management that unless their families were allowed on board they would go ashore and not sail anymore. This serious threat of strike action forced Plinius and the GAL management to back down. [82]

With each subsequent return of the 'Sobieski' the security became tighter and the welcome less friendly so that by report #38, May 20th, 1946, there was widescale

disquiet at the lack of welcome in Poland - especially compared to the genuinely warm send off from Britain.

Ostrowska's next report was even more angry. As the 'Clan Lamont' docked on the 2nd June, 1946, the security was completely tight. No one, not even Ostrowska, was allowed on board. The repatriates had no official welcome as they were marched off to a barbed wire compound where they were kept under armed guard. The families were not allowed to visit the returned troops and the best they could do was look at them through the wire. As Ostrowska pointed out to the Ministry in Warsaw this did not create a favourable impression and did not help to encourage repatriation. [83]

The PUR establishment in Warsaw, based on Rakowiecka Street No.4, was responsible for the reception of the repatriates but also for encouraging the troops to return...or at least that was the theory.

The events that happened in Italy from 1945 and the virtual power struggle among Warsaw's representatives must surely cast doubts on the veracity of Poland's claim to wanting her sons back.

The PUR representative was Major Józef Sałkowski, a man, judging by the available documents, very much at odds with both the British military authorities and with his own people in the Rome Embassy and military attache's office.

In one of his regular complaints to Warsaw

Sałkowski repeated in his letter of 30th March, 1946, what he had been told in Warsaw his role would be - namely...

"...your responsibilities will be the repatriation of civilians and military personnel." ?

The question mark was added in the PUR office in Warsaw, as was the underlining of the words "military personnel". Why this addition was made to the letter is unclear but the impression it gives is that whatever Sałkowski thought his mission was regarding the Polish Armed Forces in Italy, it was not a view shared by the higher echelons of PUR. [84]

Apparently few people wanted Sałkowski's Mission in Italy. The British, who had had enough problems trying to contain Colonel Sidor, certainly did not want more Communist backed Poles running around Italy making trouble and so refused to give him accreditation to AFHQ. Sidor himself did not want Sałkowski in Italy, especially since Sidor was going around calling himself "Chief of the Polish Military Mission for Repatriation, Rome" - which was actually the major's job.

The Polish chargé d'affaires in Rome, Wszyński, wrote to the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw informing them of the problems that were occurring in Italy - in particular the fact that Warsaw was not telling him anything, not even about the impending arrival of the newly appointed ambassador Kot.

Secret "I was only informed about the impending arrival of the ambassador's Mission in Rome when Major Sałkowski arrived here. Neither PUR nor our post in Prague or Berne had informed this office that the Mission was in transit.

Our problems have arisen primarily due to the fact that the Polish Military Mission of Col. Sidor has not been acting like the office of the military attache and after accreditation at Caserta (as Gen. Modelski's Military Mission had done in London) they then began to present themselves to the Allied authorities in the character of a Repatriation Mission dealing with members of Polish military units under British Command who wish to return to Poland.

The arrival of Major Sałkowski's Mission in Rome and the fact that it has so far been impossible to accredit it to AFHQ in Caserta due to its unclear relationship with the already operating Military Mission has provoked a great many rumours in this region." [85]

Wyszyński had written to AFHQ on the 15th March, 1946, to prepare them for the impending arrival of the new Mission:

"The State Repatriation Office in Warsaw, acting on authority of the Polish Government, has appointed a special Repatriation Mission to organise the repatriation of Polish citizens, military and civilian as well, having expressed their wish to return to their country from Italy.

This Mission, headed by Major Jozef SALKOWSKI, has been placed under the direct authority of the head of the Polish military Mission, acting in Italy since October last, and accredited to AFHQ. The Polish Repatriation Mission will therefore constitute a part of the Polish Military Mission but act on an autonomous basis as dealing with questions relating to repatriation of not only military but civilians as well." [86]

The British on the other hand were having none of this as Brigadier Napier of GHQ CMF replied to the Poles:

"1/ This GHQ has now been informed that the Polish Mission for Repatriation which has been functioning in London, and to which the proposed Polish Repatriation Mission in Italy was to have been subordinated, has now been withdrawn, and the status

of the proposed mission in Italy is now under discussion between the British and Polish Governments.

2/ This GHQ now awaits further instruction from the War Office, London, on this matter and, pending receipt of such instructions, will continue to regard Col. SIDOR as Polish military attache to the Polish Embassy ROME.

3/ In view of the change of circumstances it will be appreciated that no useful purpose would be served by calling a meeting of AFHQ representatives, and representatives from your Embassy to discuss the matter at this juncture.

4/ Until the establishment of a Polish Repatriation Mission in Italy is possible it will not be necessary for any Polish officers to be called to ROME for attachment to the Polish Military Mission as prospective members of the proposed Repatriation Mission, and you are requested to ensure that no such attachments are made." [87]

Not only did the British not want Sałkowski in Italy, but they used thinly—veiled threats to make sure the Poles got the message. Lt-Colonel Count De Salis, an AFHQ Liaison Officer, had a conversation with the Polish Chargé which was then communicated to PUR and the Warsaw Foreign Office. According to Wyszyński, Colonel De Salis...

"...was compelled by Order of AFHQ to communicate the view that he "could not be held responsible for the personal safety of Major Sałkowski's Mission". To my question of whether this was related to this transitional period or to the period after the eventual official accreditation he replied that he would have to ask Head Quarters, but in his opinion he judged it would relate to the whole time the mission was in Italy. In a very nervous tone he declared "we're talking too much about incidents that haven't happened" but there may be incidents and this despite "keeping the peace by force". [88]

Colonel De Salis went on that AFHQ "...in these sort of circumstances could not give a guarantee of safety." As to the question of whether Wyszyński

should tell Warsaw about the meeting he was told that as a "good diplomat" it was his duty.

Sałkowski was well aware of the precarious position he held in Italy. The British offered him no protection from the wrath of Anders' men and without recognition from AFHQ his only hope for protection was as a diplomat with the rights that went with that. On the 17th March, 1946, he contacted PUR in Warsaw: "Please forward diplomatic passports for the members of the Mission. This is very important for security reasons given the present situation." [89]

The 'present situation' for the PUR Mission in Italy was a bleak one. Sałkowski, unwanted, understaffed and undervalued by all sides, sent streams of letters asking for help to achieve what he had been sent to do.

"Please send officers (at least 5) and a secretary. To this point I have to do even the smallest things myself (looking for a location for the office, looking for cars, typing, translating, etc.) My office work takes 18 hours a day. I don't like to complain but to work under such conditions is simply impossible." [90]

A month after that note was written Sałkowski again complained that he could not find an office:

"To date we still do not have a location for our office. The premises which were to be given over for the Mission's use as of May 1st have, for some unknown reason, been refused. The Polish Embassy has had a hand in this although, according to the latest information, the Ministry of Finance which was disposing of the property took a negative attitude." [91]

At every turn Sałkowski felt he was being hindered by the very people who should have been helping him. In September of 1946 he had asked Colonel Sidor to open a Mission in Bari to combat 2nd Corps propaganda. This was refused by Sidor as the British would certainly not allow it. Wyszyński had the idea that possibly a Consulate might be a better idea. Although the Poles had opened three - in Venice, Ancona and Naples - if Kot agreed then a fourth one could be opened. As it turned out Kot did not agree and the request was turned down by the Embassy on the 27th August, 1946. [92]

To add further insult to an already serious injury, the staff of the Mission also proved to be a hindrance to the major - particularly the issue of Lt. Powalkowski who seemed to be doing his best to create havoc.

On the 1st June, 1946, Sałkowski wrote to both PUR and the Warsaw Foreign Office to complain:

"At this moment a rather compromising situation has developed. Lt. Powalkowski has been guilty of insubordination and of acting without my authority. He is a disorganising influence. As evidence of his behaviour I record his saying, in the presence of representatives of the Polish Military Mission that: "Mr Sałkowski is only from PUR whereas I am an officer of the General Staff."" [93]

The obvious recourse for Sałkowski was to remove the troublesome Lieutenant but was told by Colonel Sidor that it was up to him who stayed and went and Sidor decided that Powalkowski would stay.

Relations between the trio did not improve, especially after Powalkowski crashed the Mission's 'Lincoln' car in August of 1946. Colonel Sidor had suggested a tour of the various Polish camps in Italy, a round trip of some 2,000 km. On a trip of this magnitude the usual procedure would be to take the train. Leon Szybek, head of PUR's Western section, recommended a reprimand for Powalkowski, as opposed to the dismissal Sałkowski had demanded. [94]

By September, 1946, the situation was so bad that Powalkowski had to be recalled to Warsaw. Sałkowski wrote to Minister Wolski again complaining. Even on his departure Powalkowski decided to take his driver, Adolf Pawła, with him - a move that caused all manner of problems for the Mission. Pawła could not get a visa for the transport that the Lieutenant was due to go on, the formalities would take at least two weeks and this would involve delaying the whole train, this was something that UNRRA would not permit. On the other hand Pawła could not go without a visa as this would break an agreement with UNRRA that once a transport list had been finalised no new names could be added to it. On the 6th of September, 1946, Sałkowski had given express orders that Pawła was not to go - he left on the 7th regardless.

In a confidential report to PUR, Sałkowski wrote what his objections to Powalkowski were:

- "1/ He disregarded repatriation agreements.
- 2/ That on his own authority he allowed a person, unregistered with the Repatriation Dept. of the Polish Military Mission, to join a repatriation transport.
- 3/ That he lowered the authority of the Repatriation Department, Polish Military Mission."

He had also ran off without settling his debts in Italy for food and lodgings. "This was not the behaviour of a gentleman, a citizen and an officer." [95] What was worse was that he had threatened future transports with UNRRA.

2nd Lt. Zeromski, according to Sałkowski's letter to PUR of the 17th March, 1946, was another problem for the Head of the Mission. He was a drunk who might "by his actions create a scandal and compromise the Mission in the eyes of Poles hostile to the Government." [96] But even when there were such people it was difficult for the major to do anything about it. Not only did Col. Sidor go to great lengths not to help Sałkowski but the Embassy seemed to be putting up obstacles to the Mission. In another of his long line of complaining reports to PUR the major complained that he had to buy petrol on the black market at 75 lira/litre as his car was not registered with the Embassy whereby he could have bought cheap rate fuel at 25 lira/litre. [97]

If this was not enough to contend with, AFHQ still would not recognise the Mission, and the erratic policy guidelines coming out of Warsaw did not help. The work of the Mission began to grind to a halt.

Sałkowski wrote to PUR in March, 1946:

"The question of repatriation has fallen on barren ground. Allied Forces Headquarters in Caserta has not, to date, accredited the members of the Polish Repatriation Mission; without this it is simply impossible to resolve any matter on an official level. On the other hand the order I have received halting all transports, dated Warsaw 21.46 [sic], has also put me in a rather difficult position. At this time, a time when the 2nd Corps is being demobilised, we should be undertaking a wide plan of repatriation but given the above problems such work is impossible. Neither the Embassy nor the Military Mission have any idea as to this undertaking. Given the above - please forward suitable instructions as to our work here; sitting around waiting for an explanation from HQ will not bring any results."

[98]

By May, 1946, Sałkowski was so disillusioned with the situation that he was on the verge of resigning. In a secret letter to Minister Wolski at PUR the major wrote a personal and highly critical report of the situation in Italy and virtually asked Wolski to relieve him of his post.

12th May, 1946:

"I am forced to describe my work in Italy to you as frankly and openly as I can. I would categorise it as a fight for truth among strangers, as well as among our own. I have never encountered such a murky and scheming environment.

Before I come to the specific problems I would like to give light to certain incidents that have, from the moment of my departure from Warsaw, put me in a somewhat difficult and unpleasant situation.

Leaving Warsaw with two other officers (I received 20 Dollars for the whole journey for three people, forcing me to almost beg in order to reach Italy) I was assured that the rest of the team would leave within the week. To date they have yet to materialise. Lt. Powałkowski and 2nd Lt. Zeromski have committed a list of errors - perhaps through carelessness; perhaps through trying to ingratiate themselves with persons outside the Mission. Their

stay has led to many unpleasant situations and has allowed certain elements to come to some far-reaching suppositions. At this moment they are in Poland and all the work rests with me. I do not like complaining but the situation is draining my enthusiasm for work and is damaging both physically and mentally.

The principal obstacle is the lack of any agreement regulating repatriation between the Government of National Unity and the British Government.

I have no independence of action, this means that I can not enter into direct talks with any individual Allied institution. The work which is being done at the moment under such circumstances will not lead to any results. Given this I would say it is a waste to maintain the whole repatriation apparatus when the Allied authorities will themselves carry out the repatriation if not sooner then later.

I would, therefore, ask for a decision in this matter, as soon as possible, as one man (namely myself) working on his own cannot be positive nor can he achieve any positive results."

[99]

It is difficult not to feel some degree of sympathy for Major Sałkowski who seems to have been an honourable man stranded - if not amongst thieves, then amongst 'ruffians' who appeared to be intent on hampering his mission at every turn. How this worked out in real terms was that the Repatriation Mission in Italy did not have the positive effect that those well meaning officers who wanted Poles to return might have hoped for.

The reasons that the Poles did not return are many but the Mission in Italy located three areas that PUR could help with in order to encourage a greater number to return. The first was the fact that the Poles in Italy had received no letters from home. PUR was asked to act as a go-between for mail to and from Poland. The idea was

that a quick exchange of post would put an end to the hostile propaganda about the situation in Poland. PUR was also asked to supply a list of names of repatriates from the Soviet Union. Many of the Poles from 'beyond the River Bug' had had families deported into the Soviet Union and had received no information about their whereabouts. Lack of information about families was causing many Poles not to return. The third request to PUR was to assist in the transfer of cash to Poland. Whilst many Poles would not be returning to Poland come what may, they still wanted to send money to their families and friends. Since Poland needed all the hard currency it could get it was important to make the necessary arrangements. [100]

This first point about the letters was identified as an important one by many of the repatriation bodies. Kuropieska notes that the biggest boost to repatriation from the UK came with the first post from home. Poles, according to Kuropieska, have a great sense of family and the letters from Poland caused a marked change in the mood of the troops. [101] This was a factor not lost on those hostile to repatriation. The (Warsaw) Polish Red Cross Delegation in Great Britain reported in 1946 that Poles loyal to the London regime were trying to hamper such contacts:

"The soldiers, their minds clouded by the propaganda of their education officers, were afraid to send

letters to their families because, it was said, their families would be deported to Siberia for such letters. Today more than one of these soldiers is in Poland.

Soldiers in Anders' Corps - as they themselves explained in London - were punished and persecuted for writing and receiving letters from Poland. They were called traitors and renegades. They were called out in front of their units and reprimanded for their lack of patriotism.

One soldier told me that when he received a letter from his father calling him to return home he was told by his Commanding Officer that the letter was obviously not written by his father, but by an NKVD man. When the soldier replied that he recognised his father's handwriting his CO stated that the letter must have been dictated at the point of an NKVD bayonet." [102]

Colonel Sidor's accusations were even more serious in that he accused the Soldiers' Welfare Section of burning 12 sacks of letters from Poland at the end of August, 1946. [103]

The (London) Polish Red Cross also came in for criticism from its Warsaw based equivalent. On February 6th, 1946, ambassador Kot wrote to the Red Cross in Warsaw complaining about the Red Cross Delegation loyal to Anders.

"...that I consider establishing a Mission of the Polish Red Cross in Rome as absolutely essential. The Red Cross here, according to the evidence I have, is not the independent institution that it should be but merely a militarised auxiliary branch of Anders' Corps.
[...]

This organisation must blindly carry out the orders of the head of O.II [Intelligence Service] and steers clear of anything that would bring the soldiers nearer to their country. They avoid, for example, trying to forward letters from families in Poland, we also have no guarantee that the letters passed on by us ever reach their destination (we have yet to see any replies)." [104]

The problem the Warsaw Red Cross faced was that only the

London-based body was recognised by AFHQ and the Italian Government, and was the only body linked to the British Red Cross. This caused rancour in Warsaw since the Government which the London body represented was no longer recognised. Sikorski's widow was still going around calling herself the 'President of the Polish Red Cross' and refusing to have anything to do with Warsaw. What made the situation even more difficult was that in London there were two bodies claiming to be the Polish Red Cross. Dr. Kostkiewicz, the official President of the (Warsaw) Polish Red Cross, wrote to Max Huber, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, in May 1946, about the fact that the London Poles were, in fact, contravening the Red Cross Convention. Kostkiewicz asked Huber for some 'ex-officio' reaction to help rationalise the situation in London. Huber confirmed in June that only one delegation was possible and that was the one that a/ worked in its own country and b/ was recognised by its government. Whereas it was possible in wartime to have a Red Cross working in exile, the war was long over and the situation would not be allowed to continue. Huber promised to send a copy of both letters to London. [105] The London Poles did not roll over and disappear without a fight. Warsaw had to contact UNRRA to see if they could do anything to help. The (London) Polish Red Cross had refused to work with the Warsaw Red Cross in searching for relatives saying

that the warsaw people were not in fact the Red Cross "...but rather the organs of the Police and the Soviet NKVD" who were looking for information. [106]

The Warsaw Red Cross also seemed reluctant to help in Italy with the welfare of the troops. Just over a year after Kot had first broached the subject about sending a delegation to Rome, he was again writing to Kostkiewicz:

"I again draw your attention to a matter first put forward a year ago - a matter that as yet, unfortunately, remains unresolved. Today the matter is very urgent."

For Kot it was important...

"...that our outpost be run so that any Pole finding himself in difficulty should turn to us and not to any other organisation; and that he should find there a more friendly reception and better provision than anywhere else." [107]

The Warsaw Red Cross' decision was far from what Kot might have expected:

"With regards to the Polish ambassador in Rome's repeated request for the opening of an outpost there the Board has expressed the opinion that it does not see the necessity to open the above mentioned outpost." [108]

There was certainly much that needed doing in Italy. The question of the disappearing letters was so serious that Kot had to inquire of PUR what was happening in Poland to the post. Repatriation Transport 139, November 2nd 1946, had 3 extra railway wagons with some 700 sacks of Red Cross parcels for the families of soldiers. According to Kot it was the fifth such transport and as yet the Embassy had received no information. Major Leon Szybek,

PUR Director of Western Repatriation, contacted the Warsaw Red Cross:

"Given the propaganda being spread around Italy by Anders' agents the Directorate requests information be sent to the Polish Embassy in Rome concerning this and other previous transports and also details of the distribution of these parcels."

The Red Cross replied that it had indeed received all five transports from Italy :

7 September	- 200 sacks (2 wagons)
25 September	- 500 sacks (3 wagons)
17 October	- 235 sacks (1 wagon)
18 October	- 347 sacks (1 wagon)
7 October	- 707 sacks (3 wagons)

All had been distributed in Poland. [109]

The question of packets to Poland was another key reason for the need of (Warsaw) Red Cross representation among the troops. As the exiled authorities would have nothing to do with any body representing Warsaw so they would not recommend any services provided by these bodies. The Polish Red Cross offered parcels to Poland that were both cheaper and of a higher quality than those sold by private companies. The soldiers trying to do their best for their people back home were getting a raw deal due to the political situation. [110]

The Polish (Warsaw) Red Cross did, eventually, open a post in Italy nearly two years after Kot's original letter. The contradiction that was found by Dr. Każimiera Zawadska, head of the Polish fact-finding mission to Italy, was that Wyszyński "...the present

chargé d'affaires has taken an altogether positive attitude (as opposed to Ambassador Kot)". [111] It would seem that after two years of pushing for a Red Cross delegation in Italy Kot may not have been as in favour of the idea as his letters might suggest.

If the Warsaw authorities wanted the Poles, both military and civilian, to return then much would depend on how repatriates were treated on their arrival and what provisions were made for their resettlement.

In August, 1946 the UNRRA representative in Warsaw cabled London with his report about the treatment of DPs and PWX in Poland:

"(1) ROUTE FROM US AND FRENCH ZONES THROUGH CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO RECEPTION CENTRES DZIEDZICE AND BIELSKO. THESE CENTRES ALSO USED RECEPTION REPATRIATES AUSTRIA AND ITALY. ROUTE FROM UK ZONE STETTIN BY BOAT.

(2) DZIEDZICE AND BIELSKO CENTRES SEEN SEVERAL OCCASIONS. ARRANGEMENTS CONSIDERED SATISFACTORY. FACILITIES FOR MEDICAL INSPECTION, ISSUE OF IDENTITY CARDS, REGISTRATION, PROVISION OF RAILWAY TICKETS TO DESTINATION, SMALL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, THREE DAYS FOOD. STETTIN NOT SEEN BUT UNDERSTOOD ON SIMILAR LINES. CAPACITY OF CENTRES WILL BE CABLED LATER.

(3) 80 PER CENT OR MORE REPATRIATES GERMANY HAVE DECIDED ON DESTINATION IN POLAND AFTER ARRIVAL AND MERELY OBTAIN FREE RAILWAY TICKET TO APPROPRIATE PLACE WHERE THEY HAVE FRIENDS, RELATIVES. ONLY SMALL PROPORTION SETTLE IN NEW TERRITORIES, ARRANGEMENTS WROCLAW FOR SETTLEMENT SEEN AND CONSIDERED ADEQUATE IN VIEW OF LACK OF RESOURCES. AVERAGE STAY DZIEDZICE AND BIELSKO 24 HOURS. UNRA [sic] OFFICER OBSERVED RECENT PARTY FROM ITALY PROGRESSING WITHIN 12 HOURS, THENCE JOURNEY HOME 3 TO 4 DAYS ACCORDING TO DISTANCE." [112]

The Repatriation Missions tried to put every positive view forward to potential returnees. In a radio broadcast

from Graz-Klagenfurt to Poles in Austria, 24th May, 1946,
the Mission announced that all was well:

"To date nearly 1½ million Poles have returned to Poland from the West, at least 90 odd percent are repatriates from western and central Germany. After crossing the Polish frontier all the repatriates receive Polish documents, they receive medical attention, they are given tickets for their onward journey and are fed. The repatriates are not subjected to any customs search." [113]

The Poles were careful that everything should go as smoothly as possible as the slightest whiff of scandal would have been seized upon by the London Poles and repatriation could have dried up overnight. At all costs adverse reports by escort and liaison officers had to be avoided. In particular special attention had to be paid to Alexander Kharitonoff, a US Army major and escort officer. Dr. T. Chromecki, head of the Warsaw Foreign Ministry's Western and Northern Department, wrote a top secret and urgent note to PUR on the 20th January, 1946:

"Our Ambassador in Rome requests all possible caution in dealing with Kharitonoff so as not to give him any cause to complain. It is assumed in Rome that he will be in charge of future transports and any negative opinions about the reception of repatriates in Italian wagons by the Polish authorities may create problems in getting further trains." [114]

Surprisingly, or perhaps not so surprisingly given the enthusiasm to be rid of the refugee problem, few western observers reported the serious troubles that faced the repatriates. Some Polish observers involved with repatriation did make an attempt to bring the situation to the attention of those who might do something about

it. One PUR representative wrote to Minister Wolski in July, 1945:

"I have just this moment received a telephone report from the Chief of the PUR section in Katowice that in Zebrzydowice the repatriates returning from the West - in whom we have an obligation to take the closest interest - are being robbed in an unprecedented manner by border guards, customs officials etc. (Soviet)

In communicating the above I would ask the Citizen Minister for some intervention - with regards to this it has to be admitted that the repatriates, while in transit through Czechoslovakia are provided with excellent security from the authorities there but on crossing the Polish border they meet the sort of experience which I have outlined above," [115]

The report from the Ministry of Information representative to his superior about events at the transit station was even more candid and angry:

25th July, 1945. To Citizen Matuszewski.

"What is happening here is very sad and cannot be communicated over any great distance. The Poles who are arriving in Poland are usually robbed by groups of criminal Red Army soldiers. Under various pretexts eg. checking identity or suspicion of being German - they are robbed of their last possessions and often beaten up. Instead of being welcomed back to the homeland as they should be these Poles are set upon. No one takes an interest in them nor asks them where they are travelling on to. Often, in broad daylight, women are raped on the station by various degenerates. The Security Services seem to cause them great annoyance as well. No one gives them a warm meal or a piece of bread. I wonder what has become of the 70,000,000 [Złoty] which according to figures, the Government has set aside for just this purpose. I think the Citizen Minister should use his influence with the military authorities so that they escort the trains arriving from the West into the interior of Poland. Regardless of this, this issue must be positively sorted out. Similarly some intervention with General Szatilov has to be made regarding the Red Army's infringement of the law. Furthermore food must be provided so that the returnees can, at the very least, have a warm meal.

I have come to the conclusion that these people

are badly misinformed about the internal situation in Poland. They think that they will all be immediately sent to Siberia and that in Poland only the Soviets rule. A campaign of enlightenment must absolutely be started. For my part I do what I can but am always hampered in my task by a complete lack of manpower.

I again ask for your help in this task.

Nowak, Kazimierz. Head of Dept.
Ministry of Information & Propaganda
Lignica, Lower Silesia

[116]

The remarkable thing about this confidential letter is that it is not the work of the London Poles seeking to pick faults with the Communists, but the appeal of a man, otherwise loyal to the regime, who worked at the sharp end of repatriation and could see where the problems were.

A report in Kraków's "Dziennik Polski" from December 1945, shows that six children died in one night because they had been left in open lorries in the freezing cold. Somebody - as the article protests - had to be responsible for the state of affairs. [117] The Polish Minister of Justice, Henryk Świątkowski, was also the President of the Polish-Soviet Friendship Society, an ironic position given the numbers of Polish women raped by Red Army soldiers. Apologists for the Soviets glossed over the massive military presence in Poland: John Ennals for the "New Statesman" wrote that he had seen fewer Russians in Warsaw than he had seen Poles in London. [118] In a similar vein the Polish Socialist Tadeusz Ćwika who was on a visit to the UK publicly announced

that while travelling from Warsaw to Kielce he had only seen one or two Soviet soldiers. [119] Even Kuropieska commented on the primitive nature of this type of propaganda. For years the British public had been used to seeing masses of US soldiers on the streets so few people were convinced by talk that there were no Soviet troops in Poland.

That is not to say that such information did not leak out westward. Some repatriates went back to Poland to see conditions for themselves and then returned to Italy and other places to inform colleagues. Roman Nowakowski, an NCO of the 10th Wołyński Rifle Battalion, rejoined his unit in Italy. His conclusions were that no true Pole would be able to stand living in the prevailing situation.

"15/XII/1945: The transport of soldiers from 2nd Corps arrived at the collection centre at Kozy. The NKVD who had been waiting for the officers to arrive separated about 200 according to a list and took them to an unknown destination. The rest, about 800 people... were conscripted to Zymierski's Army and given a 2-3 week holiday. Persons suspected of any political activity are demobilised and whisked off for interrogation after which they do not return. No one knows what becomes of them." [120]

Zygmunt Boger, a Volksliste DP's experience was very similar to this, especially his very near conscription to the "People's" Army.

"I arrived at Dziedzice. After three hours a patrol from the Polish Army turned up - the news had already gotten around that former German soldiers had returned. The Lieutenant from the patrol got into the railway wagon and told us that we had all been enlisted into the Polish Army. How the Silesians set upon these warriors! They wanted to go

back to their families - "Our families" they shouted. Two Americans turned up at the sound of the argument. They too shouted that under no circumstances was it going to happen. First we would go to our families. The Lieutenant kept pressing and I'll never forget how the American went up to him, spat, and said "fucking Polak!" At that point the patrol left.

We arrived in Poznań around midnight. It was silent and dark as hell. I was in American fatigues. As I was going down the station stairs towards the exit I was approached by a railwayman who had been staring at me.

- Where are you off to?

- What do you mean 'where' - home!

- Have you gone crazy - he said - stay in the station and sleep on the bench. Don't go wandering about at night or they'll get you.

- What do you mean? The war's over. There are no more Germans.

- Worse than the Germans have arrived." [121]

Even those who were conscripted to the Polish Army on return had a surprise waiting for them. Tadeusz Czerkowski found that he had been demoted. He read on his registration form that the rank of Lieutenant had been crossed out in red ink and "conscript" had been entered instead. He approached his CO in the traditional manner using the word "Pan" - Sir:

"- Panie Captain..." I started but he interrupted.

- All the 'Panowie' stayed in England, here in Poland there are only citizens. Is that understood?"

- Citizen Captain there has been a mistake: I am a 2nd Lieutenant, that was my last rank in the army...

Again he interrupted:

- That was not an army it was a criminal gang! Dismissed!" [122]

Adolf Worzok, a Silesian who had served in the German Army before his return, also lost his rank when he reported to the Office of Public Security. They asked him

about his past and he answered with some pride that he had been a member of the Union of Poles in Germany, a member of the Polish Scouts and the Union of Polish Academics. To which the official shouted to one of his colleagues: "Franek! Come and have a look. One more fascist has returned to Poland!" When he was enrolled to study in Wrocław he told the authorities that he had held the rank of Sargeant in the German Army but was told that that could not be taken into account. If he wanted to complain he would have to write to Marshal Rola-Żymierski. He was granted a "Certificate of Temporary Association to the Polish Nation" for which he had to pay 25 Złoty for the privilege - and could be revoked at any time. [123] To cap it all Worzok was left with the title of "Wehrmachtowiec". Considering the large numbers of potential repatriates who had served in the Wehrmacht this treatment would not make return more likely.

In communist Poland the contribution of the Polish Armed Forces in the West has been consistently undervalued in comparison to the Poles who had fought on the eastern front. For decades in Poland the Battle of Lenino in which Polish and Soviet units took part held a foremost place in military history: Monte Cassino and Falaise were virtually ignored. Even in 1970 the Polish Defence Ministry was writing:

"The Battle of Monte Cassino took place in a secondary theatre of operations and the Allied victory there, bought at great cost, had no real influence on the course of, and the final victory of the war in Europe." [124]

The only units to return to Poland as a body were the two fighting groups from France. The Polish Force in France was made up of the 19th and 21st Group - consisting of 8 Companies of 290 men each. They had been acting as occupation troops in parts of the French Zone of Germany under the French 1st Army. Their Commander, Major Bolesław Jeleń, was loyal to the new regime in Poland and refused to join the mainstream Armed Forces in the West. In October he and his men returned to Poland and were greeted with a heroes welcome - the only Polish troops from the West who were. On the 18th November, 1945, they were treated to a victory parade on the Aleje Ujazdowskie (the **only** victory parade attended by Poles from the West) in front of the General Staff of the 'reborn' Polish Army. Marshal Żymierski issued an Order of the Day, No. 257, on the 30th October, 1945.

"You return to your country in closed ranks and fully armed as the first Polish units to return from the West. You who fought the Germans in France at the side of our great ally went on a glorious fighting path that has spread widely the fame of fighting Poland." [125]

Jeleń's return was used as a stick to beat the other returning troops who were arriving from Italy and Britain. Żymierski's Order No. 297, 29th November, 1945, was directed at Polish units returning from Italy:

"You return not like an organised military unit but rather as a loose group of soldiers. Your leaders, with only a few exceptions, have deserted you as they did in September, 1939. They did not want to return to Poland and with terror, threats and a slanderous campaign against their own country they prevented you from returning. As a result of this tens of thousands of your brothers have remained in Italy. Anders wants to turn them into an interventionist army against the Polish nation that would enter Poland and return the fortunes of the landowners and great industrialists.

Your brothers, who fought by the side of the Red Army returned to Poland from the East fully equipped and with excellent weapons. They did not have their fighting material taken away from them. They did not have a plebiscite thrown at them about returning to their country. Their standards, which went on the most magnificent armed road to victory in our history, from Lenino, across the Wisła, Warsaw, Oder-Neisse, to Berlin and Dresden, have been awarded the highest Polish Orders and those of our ally the Soviet Union.

Recently the Polish Battalions which fought by the side of the French Armed Forces returned. They returned as organised units with their arms in their hands and with their standards. They were given a heart-felt and deeply grateful send off by the French authorities. You on the other hand were sent home in such a manner and with such material and equipment that is not worthy of your efforts as soldiers or of the blood that was spilt at Tobruk and Monte Cassino." [126]

The troops who returned from Britain were treated much the same; Żymierski's Order No. 2, 3rd January, 1946:

"You, like the soldiers of the 2nd Corps in Italy, were sent like demobilised military repatriates while those who fought by the side of the USSR and France returned with unfurled banners, in closed ranks and with formidable fighting material.

Your brothers who still remain abroad and who, contrary to the will of the Polish nation, are under a foreign Command and are terrorised and confused by the Sanacja generals, will also return home when the truth about Poland wins over the lies of Raczkiewicz and Anders. Those who feel themselves to be Poles will return without any appeals from us. About the others - we shall not worry." [127]

It was little surprise that such criticism raised hackles with the British Foreign Office. Warsaw was complaining that enough Poles were not going back to Poland, and not returning in organised units, yet this begged the question of whose fault this was. After receiving the text of the order to 2 Corps veterans the FO contacted Cavendish-Bentinck instructing him to protest in Warsaw.

"HMG wish to make it plain that if all the Polish troops in Italy have not been able to return to Poland in their existing units, this is solely because HMG have left the choice entirely to the individual men themselves and only some 14,000 out of 110,000 in Italy and the Middle East at present wish to return." [128]

The BBC Polish Service was instructed to send out corrections to Warsaw's allegations. The Warsaw Poles seemed to be doing everything possible to stop the Polish Forces from returning and the troops were under little illusion of what was happening at home. As they viewed developments there they became more and more depressed.

Frank Savery wrote a report on the "stimmungen" of the Poles in the UK, on the 8th February, 1946, to W.D. Allen of the FO in which he described the Polish state of mind:

"It is like a stagnant pond: there is no current of fresh water flowing through and in consequence the old, stale water smells just a little worse with every day that passes." [129]

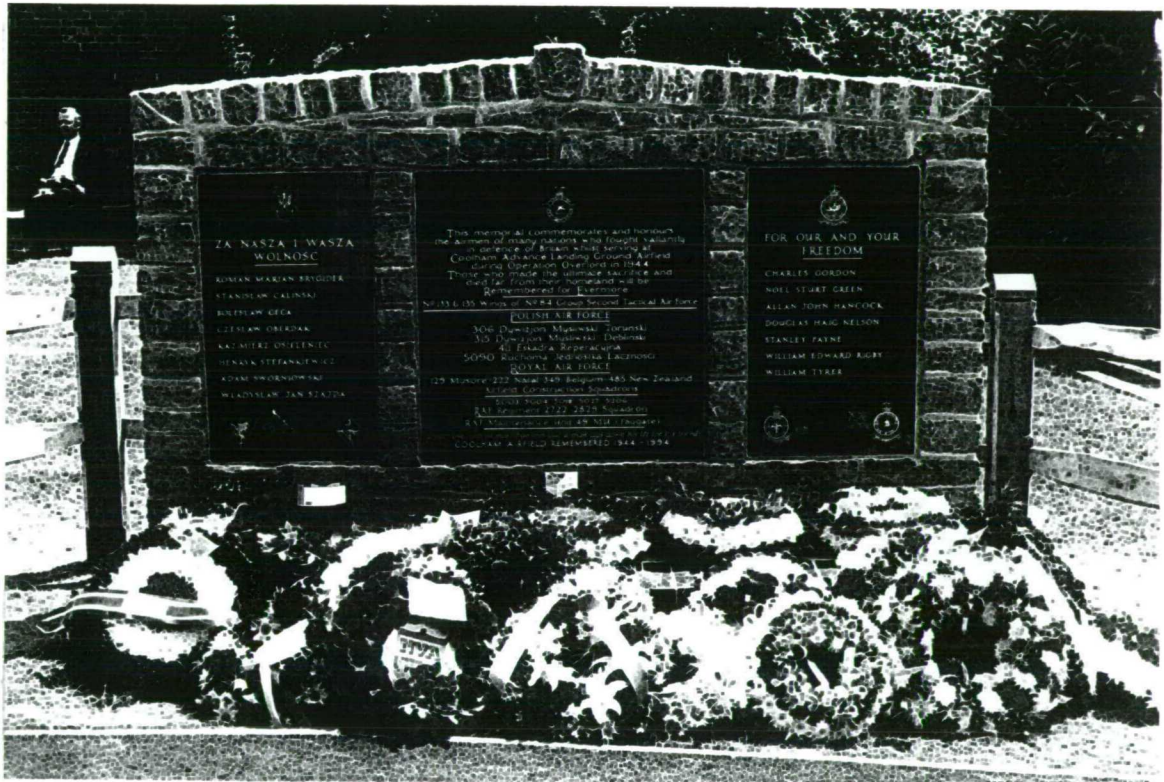
The Poles in the West did not know where they stood. No one seemed to want them. The British were trying to rid themselves of the Poles and the Poles in Poland seemed just as reluctant to have them. Galsworthy of the

FO continued Savery's metaphor saying that Warsaw had recently stirred up the pond with its note "...disowning their troops abroad". To some extent this had calmed the anxiety of the troops "...since it increases the difficulties in the way of repatriation" and that it made "...agreement between Warsaw and ourselves less likely than ever."

CHAPTER SIX

"Get Them Back To Where They Belong
Or Shoot The B-."

British Public Reaction To The 'Polish Invasion'.



Half A Century On And The Poles In Britain
Begin To Be Acknowledged.

CHAPTER SIX

By February of 1945 the gloom of despair had settled over the Polish Armed Forces. The Yalta Conference, the grave of so many Polish hopes, had removed the will of the Poles to continue the struggle and self doubt began to creep into their minds. It became apparent to British Government circles that if the Allies were still to make use of the Polish Forces then some gesture would have to be made.

From the Polish perspective the future did indeed look bleak. On the battlefields of Europe the Poles were still dying and it was becoming more and more difficult to answer the question : why? The country they had set out to fight for was now, apparently, out of reach. They saw that they would probably not be going home but then what? The future did indeed look empty.

During the Yalta debate in February, 1945, Churchill made what became known as his 'pledge' to the Poles:

"In any event, His Majesty's Government will never forget the debt they owe to the Polish troops who have served them so valiantly, and to all those who have fought under our command. I earnestly hope it may be possible to offer the citizenship and freedom of the British Empire, if they so desire.... But so far as we are concerned we should think it an honour to have such faithful and valiant warriors dwelling among us as if they were men of our own blood."
[1]

Fine words indeed but an expression not exactly shared by all the Departments of State; the Home Office, for example, did not see the influx of two hundred thousand Poles as such a great 'honour'

"The Home Office view is that the settlement in this country of Poles to the number of 100,000 to which would have to be added a further figure for the wives and children who have to be allowed to join them - would present a most serious problem at the present time. The fact that the resident alien population of this country is some 150,000 gives a measure of the problem involved. The addition of large numbers of Poles would cause obvious difficulties in view of the housing shortage and present economic conditions and would moreover involve a real risk of anti-alien agitation since many people hold the view that there are already too many foreigners resident here.

The Home Office therefore feel strongly that the longer the possibility of opting for return to Poland is kept open, and the less the Poles are encouraged to suppose that they would be allowed to settle here, the greater the number who may be expected to go back to Poland." [2]

Similarly in a memo to the Committee on Polish Questions the Home Secretary wrote the following:

"The total recorded foreign population of the United Kingdom has not hitherto exceeded 290,000, and so large an influx of foreigners (all of one nationality and all coming within a comparatively limited period) is likely to arouse considerable public uneasiness or hostility. In so far as the Poles can be employed in occupations in which there is a shortage of labour their services will be of advantage to this country; but experience suggests that the quality of their work is poor and there are likely to be strong representations that these foreign newcomers are prejudicing the position of our own people, especially of those who are being demobilised from the British forces." [3]

The words of Home Secretary, Chuter Ede, presaged many of the problems that were soon to face the British Government.

The total number of Poles which was in question at the end of the war was some 194,460 military personnel and some 33,000 dependants and civilians [For breakdown see Appendix E] but with continued recruitment, much to the chagrin of the British, the number rose to just over a quarter of a million.

Just as Government Ministers felt uneasy at the prospect of the Poles arriving on their doorstep so too did the British public. The Foreign Office was swamped with a mass of protest letters about the impending arrival of the Poles. Count Raczyński sent the following note to the FO saying that someone was printing and then distributing them in the Fife area.

ATTENTION ! ATTENTION !

Your Home and Job
demands that You

STOP POLISH INVASION NOW

STAND EASY and
You've "Had it Chum"

[4]

Certainly the Scots, who had for so long put up with the brunt of the Poles seemed to be getting frustrated at the fact that the Poles were still not going home. While Britain was at war with Germany the Scots were prepared to put up with the foreigners in the sure and certain knowledge that after Victory Day they would return to Poland. With the messy conclusion of the post-war settlement these previously—held truths could not be relied on. It looked not only that the Poles in Scotland

might be staying but that they might soon be joined by thousands more from Europe.

That is not to say that all Scots had antipathy towards the Poles. Many warm and lasting friendships had been formed during the war years, and many Scots felt a great deal of sympathy for the plight of the Poles.

Miss L. Herd wrote to the Foreign Office in June of 1946 about a meeting in Edinburgh where 2,500 Scots called on the British Government to reconsider the plan to bring the Poles to the UK. One of the speakers, Councillor Sim of Inverkeithing, called to the attending: "Are you going to stand by and allow this country to be overrun by foreigners". According to Miss Herd:

"He seemed to be Anti-Everything. Anti-Bevin, Anti-Churchill and was raising the Polish question as a means for voicing his Anti-feeling for all humanity." It was, she went on, "Ungrateful, unjust and above all unchristian." [5]

Positive views were rather heavily outnumbered by negative ones. As Hancock of the FO minuted plaintively alongside Miss Herd's letter "I wish we had more letters like this." And the truth was that protests came in by the bag full. One Railway Union branch wrote to Attlee:

"I am instructed to forward the following resolution which was passed at my branch yesterday:- 'That this meeting of Railwaymen at Colwick protest at paying taxation to maintain in Britain and Italy, Polish armed forces that are not being used for the furtherance of democratic ends, and are not loyal to their National Government, with whom we have diplomatic relations'.

F. Welton, Secretary." [6]

Trades Unions, in particular, were open in their

hostility to the Poles, for a variety of reasons that will be discussed later. The Kirkaldy branch of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers was equally vociferous in its letter to Attlee:

"Dear Sir and Brother.

At our branch meeting held on 9-7-45 I was instructed to urge upon you to do everything in your power to assist the Polish soldiers in this country to get home to their families.

The position has become so bad for these men that they are now appealing to the people in this area to assist them in getting home, pointing out at the same time that they are even impeded in getting postal communication with their relatives." [7]

Similarly the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers forwarded the following, setting down in no uncertain terms just why they objected to the Poles:

"Our objection to the Poles is that they are a reactionary corps of people who refuse to face responsibility in their own country. They will become not a temporary labour force but a permanent labour force that will be a reactionary element in the country if allowed to settle down." [8]

The accusation that the Poles were reactionaries was a widespread one, and most of this venom was focused on General Anders and his 2nd Corps. As one businessman from Preston wrote:

"Can I ask you the exact cost to the British taxpayer of all the Poles in Scotland, England and Italy under fascist Gen. Anders? Over half of the rank and file are anxious to return to Poland, but are forcibly prevented by their reactionary officers." [9]

The truth of these accusations is dealt with in chapter four but here it is enough to say that, irrespective of the truth, such thoughts were believed and gained

credibility in the public consciousness.

By July of 1946 the Foreign Office had received forty protests from Trades Unions, Trades Councils and from Co-operative Guilds plus twenty protest letters forwarded by MPs from their constituents. The highest proportion of these were from Scotland but many were not. The Foreign Office was happy to dismiss the English protests as a Leftist conspiracy. Hankey of the FO minuted that they were "artificially stirred up by Communist influence." [10]

Communist propaganda mixed with not a little xenophobia led to many heated comments:

"...it's damned high time there were something done, No wonder they say 'let us stay' they were never as well off in all there lives. [sic] I say get them back to where they belong or shoot the B-, I am going to write to Sir Stafford Cripps about it."
[11]

Mr. Bell's letter to the FO typifies many of the opinions that were circulating at that time.

The influence of the Communists can certainly not be discounted. Believers in conspiracy theories would find many similarities in the pronouncements of the Warsaw Government and the Moscow Press agencies, and the views listed above. If discrediting the Polish Armed Forces in the eyes of the British was the general idea then the plan seemed to be going well. By way of comparison to the British Unions' views, the following is the (Warsaw) Polish Trades Unions resolution at the World Federation of Trades Unions on the 13th June, 1946.:

"Considering that over a year after the end of the war there are still in existence Polish Armed Forces under the influence and command of reactionary Officers headed by Gen. Anders, that Gen. Anders and his associates are a basis and command centre for terrorist gangs in Poland, that these gangs are murdering Trade Union, workers and peasants leaders and are supported with funds, arms and manpower by Gen. Anders's staff, which has been established in several court proceedings. [...]

Considering further that a further existence of these Polish Armed Forces under British Command but dominated by Polish fascist generals and Officers constitutes one of the more dangerous focal points of fascism in the world, threatens peaceful relations and is a centre of imperialist propaganda for a third war...." [12]

The resolution called for the Poles to be demobilised and that the "Anders Officer Clique" should be removed from any influence.

The attitude of the British Trades Union movement was rather negative towards the Poles in the first years after the war. One Polish commentator at the time wrote that the T.U.C. had made a mockery of the old Marxian slogan "proletarians of the world unite..." changing it to "proletarians of the UK unite - keep out the foreigners!" [13] The biggest fear for the Unions in Britain was that jobs and working conditions would suffer as the new wave of foreigners arrived. Although the apprehension was on the most part understandable, the open hostility came as quite a surprise to many. Post-war Britain was in desperate need of labour. Many men were serving abroad as occupation forces. The war losses would also have to be made up but at the same time the crops had to be brought in and the coal had to be dug. As "The

Economist" wrote in May of 1946:

"It is fortunate that the question of their [the Poles] demobilisation should come at a time when, particularly in agriculture and the coal mines, Britain is faced with a severe labour shortage. There will presumably be no violent opposition from the trades unions (in spite of the hostility of the Communists to all non-returning Poles); but the T.U.C. will certainly ask for safeguards." [14]

In order to quell the public and labour disquiet about the incoming Poles the Foreign Office produced a standard format reply [Appendix F] in which the main public complaints were dealt with; the unnecessary passages could be deleted by the FO secretaries.

One of the major anomalies in the whole labour situation was that it appeared that the Unions preferred that jobs remained unfilled than that Poles should take them. This led to many a heated exchange in the Commons, especially after interventions by Mr. Piratin, one of the Communist members. In a question to the Labour Minister, Mr Isaacs, the case of the Red Lion Hotel, High Wycombe, was brought up in which a group of Poles were playing music:

Mr. Piratin: "May I ask him to bear in mind that the Polish musicians are taking the place of a band, all the members of which belong to the Musicians Union."

Mr. Lennox-Boyd: "Is it not the case in some quarters of the House that if the Poles take jobs they are abused and if they do not they are called drones? [...]"

Mr. Piratin: "May I ask the Minister to bear in mind that the essence of my question is merely to ensure that such Poles who are in this country do not in any way scab or blackleg on British Labour and that in this case

they are actually replacing British Labour? That is the essence of the question, and if the hon. member for Mid-Bedford (Mr. Lennox-Boyd) disputes that, he is in favour of scab labour."

Lt.Col. Sir Thomas Moore: "Does the right hon. Gentleman approve of this vendetta against Poles who want to work here rather than return to Communist Poland?"

Mr. Isaacs: "May I confine myself to the Question? There has been a complaint. The understanding which was reached and has been accepted by everyone is that foreign labour can only be employed when no British labour is available and willing to do the work." [15]

And as if to emphasise the point guidelines were issued to ensure that Polish musicians were kept in line.

"No Member of Polish Units shall play in Uniform in public outside the precincts of his camp. Whether for a fee or otherwise."

"No private contracts shall be discussed or arranged within the precincts of Camp."

"Any musical combination of Polish personnel or individual Polish Officers or Soldiers shall not advertise themselves on bills etc. by any title that would indicate their membership of or connection with the P.R.C."

"There is no objection to any Polish Officer or Soldier becoming a member of the Musicians Union." [16]

For the Poles the policy of the Unions seemed bizarre. Even if no-one wanted a particular job Poles were not allowed to take up the post just on the off-chance a British worker might take it up. Mr Lennox-Boyd again took up the case of the Poles in the Commons, and in particular the case of F. Magrian, a PRC soldier, who had been offered a job in a Brighton

restaurant but had been refused permission by the Brighton office of the Ministry of Labour who stated that the post could be filled by a British labourer. The Government reply was that that was the situation. Because Brighton had a high number of unemployed, Poles could not be employed. Poles could not be taken on if British labour was available and willing. [17]

As well as the restrictive labour laws there were other administrative problems that had to be overcome. A letter of complaint was sent to the "Polish Daily" from Sgt. Nietz:

"The day before yesterday the silk factory informed several men who had applied for work that the Preston Labour Exchange does not agree to the employment of Poles from camps other than the one in the neighbourhood of Preston and that for this reason our application for work cannot at present be taken into consideration. If the Poles in the camp near Preston, which is only 9 miles from the town do not apply for work and have not yet been engaged, it must be because they either do not want to work or have other prospects. Other Poles should be admitted to work in Preston where there is plenty of work. It is not my fault that I am living near the town of Hereford where there is no industry and only a few men can find work. This is an impediment caused by the British authorities whose "raison d'etre" is to direct men to productive employment.

(1) Is it the task of the Resettlement Corps to provide suitable civilian employment?

(2) I found suitable employment and can begin it today.

(3) The factory is ready to accept me because it needs workmen. Meanwhile I have to wander from camp to camp and cannot find work. Is this common sense?" [18]

This was not an isolated case as soldiers began to be caught up in official red-tape. Wojciech Łęski was offered a job but his move to the Army reserve took so

long to complete that by the time he was ready to take up the post the vacancy had been filled. [19] [see also Appendix G]

At the Cabinet Foreign Labour Committee meeting, on the 25th November, 1946, another problem of placement was brought up. At a tin mine five miles from Partreath there were vacancies for 80 men. Nearby there was a Polish camp run by the Air Ministry for the Polish Air Wing with a manpower of 2,000. If a Pole took a job he would, by the terms of Resettlement provisions, have to leave the service camp but in the area there was no alternative accommodation, hence he could not take the job. This type of no-win situation was resented by both Poles and the Ministry of Labour who also protested to the War Office that the situation was "not logical".[20] It appeared that the WO was putting forward administrative difficulties that "could be surmounted if the primary object was to get the Poles into work."

According to historian Keith Sword, there were some valid reasons for Polish labour to be held as a less desirable option for the British authorities, unlike the labour using prisoners of war. The Poles could not be directed into jobs at ministerial will; they could not be prevented from mixing with the local population with all the resulting risks of friction and civil disorder; if the Poles were admitted to civil employment this would be a first step to permanent settlement; once the labour

crisis was over the Poles, unlike POWs, could not be sent home. [21] Such factors must surely have affected British thinking at the time, but there were indeed other, historical factors that had to be taken into consideration.

According to Towpik-Szejnowska's study on the PRC in the UK many miners in the Lancashire pits remembered their history when in the 19th Century Polish miners were used as blackleg labour and as strike-breakers. [22] This possibly accounts for some of the paranoia that affected the mining industry over the employment of the Poles. Much also stemmed from a distrust of all things foreign and a fear that Poles would be employed at lower rates and have increased norms of production that would affect the conditions of British miners. If, after all, a mine manager could employ a labourer at lower cost and with a higher rate of production would he not do so - even if that worker was a 'bloody foreigner'. From the mineworkers' perspective the question was quite straight-forward - it was not that there were not enough British people who wanted to become miners but rather that working conditions deterred people from employment. The solution was to improve conditions rather than bringing in Poles to, as they saw it, further undermine the very fabric of worker-management relations. Hence they fought the Government proposals tooth and nail. As Emmanuel Shinwell, Minister for Fuel and Power, admitted to

the Commons in October, 1946:

"I can assure hon. members that the question of Polish labour in the Mines has been under review for many months, I will not seek to deny it. Unfortunately, as it appears to me, the National Union of Mineworkers are not willing to have the Poles in the pits. [...]

Therefore when I was faced with a problem of whether I should force into the pits 200 trained Polish miners, who were all that were available, or defer, at any rate for the time being, to the views of the National Union of Mineworkers, what would hon. members expect me to do?"[23]

Not everyone was so understanding with regards to the Government's position. "The Times", a newspaper not known for its support of the Poles in the West as will be shown later, wrote in its leader of September 2nd, 1946:

"If the nation shivers next winter it will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that such coal as it is possible to burn in British grates has not been touched by foreign hands, except by a couple of hundred pairs of Polish hands, if the Mineworkers' Union decides one day to permit it." [24]

Of the many criticisms levelled against the Poles one that caused much resentment was that somehow they were parasites and lazy freeloaders living at the expense of the British tax-payer. There was some effort by the British Joint Committee for Polish Affairs to redress the balance in the argument. It produced a pamphlet titled "Do the Poles here really work? Some facts". The pamphlet was reproduced in the "Polish Daily" so that Poles could show it to their English friends. The main contention of the pamphlet, produced in early 1949, was that the tax-money the British had put into the PRC had been more than made up by the income tax received

from Poles already in employment. [25] As logical as the argument was, it was difficult for Poles to shake off the epithet of 'sponger'

At Questions to the Under-secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, McNeil, on the 21st January, 1948 a fairly typical exchange took place between those who supported the Poles and those who did not:

Sir Stanley Reed: "Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the painful effect in many areas in which these camps are situated by the Poles being maintained in idleness while British workers are called upon for a special effort, and are even directed into special employment."
[...]

Vice-Admiral Taylor: "Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the idleness on the part of the Poles is their fault or not?"

Mr McNeil: "I should in fairness admit that there has been a most gratifying volume of volunteering by these people." [26]

One of the imperatives for the Resettlement Act in 1947 was to quell such murmurings. "The Manchester Guardian" of the 4th February, 1947 wrote:

"Only those who are blind to our tragic background of the Polish problem will question our moral obligations to these Polish ex-service men. But it is fair to wonder how long we can afford to maintain such a costly contingent in idleness and vacillation at a time when our labour force needs 657,000 recruits to bring it up to its strength in 1939."
[27]

Offering criticism is always easy, finding solutions is usually the difficult part. For many MPs the Resettlement Act was not the solution to the problem. To quote Michael Astor speaking during the Bill's second reading:

"Today we are a bit complacent about them. These Poles are positively rotting with boredom, in many cases - absolute abject boredom. They have centred their hopes in this country. Their hopes in their own country have gone, for the time being, at any rate. They had various reasons to believe they might be allowed to acquire British citizenship. Now they are forcibly unemployed, and they have no hopes or prospects. The shortcoming of this bill is that it does not provide what is needed - prospects." [28]

Vice-Admiral Taylor, another of the MPs who did much to further awareness of the problems of the Poles commented:

"They have been waiting a very long time, even years, in this country, while doing nothing at all, and there is nothing so devastating for a human being as to be doing absolutely nothing. That is one reason, I am afraid, why many people in the United Kingdom think rather badly of the Poles." [29]

Even as the Resettlement Corps was winding down there was a small contingent for whom it was very hard to find gainful employment. As a proportion to the overall total, officers made up a large part of the unemployable. By the 25th November, 1948, there were still 14,965 members still in the Resettlement Corps.

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
<u>Officers</u> :	6,161	320
<u>Other Ranks</u> :	8,154	330

[30]

A proportion of these were involved in administrative duties, while others were just too old or too ill to be employed in civilian work, yet they too became a weapon for those who would criticise the policy of Polish resettlement.

Mr Scollan : "Are the Government aware that the people of this country are a bit tired of carrying these 14,000 people for five years - [Hon. Members : 'No.'] - and how much longer are we to carry them? Either make them work or get them home to where they came from."

Major Lloyd : "Can the right hon. Gentleman indicate when this Russian vendetta against our gallant Polish Ally will stop." [31]

For the most part the plans to help the Poles were made with only a grudging will. On one side of British society there was a friendly welcome with a recognition of past struggles and on the other side was the feeling that enough was enough; the Poles had played their part and now it was time for them to go back to Poland. The former view largely sums up the views of the British Right and the latter the view of the Left - for the Attlee Government steering a middle course was a difficult one that pleased few and angered many. Yet something had to be done - as one MP put it: "I feel that we owe it to these Poles, not all of whom are villains." [32] With such warm-hearted and friendly sentiments the Poles were sure to feel welcome.

- : - : -

If the British public viewed the impending arrival of the Polish Armed Forces with unparalleled horror then for the Poles too it was not the answer to all their dreams.

To treat the Poles as a single body would be to do them an injustice. For example the 1st Polish Corps, stationed in Scotland, was made up of many pre-war officers and administrators who had managed to make their way to the UK after the fall of Poland in 1939 (there were also a great many administrators and civil servants), whilst the 2nd Corps was made up from agricultural workers and settlers of the eastern 'Kresy' that now formed part of the Soviet Union. For this second group their situation was easier to accept, and for many pre-war peasants life in the UK was a vast improvement. Since they had few demands out of life they found it easy to save money. For others life was a step down the social ladder. There was a severe element of déclassé as former white-collar workers had to take on manual jobs by which to survive. For men with skills it was easier but for men who had spent the pre-war period as career officers or administrators life was difficult.

There are many stories of officers who were forced to take menial work, such as one General who was refused a job as a luggage porter since "...it wouldn't be fair to such a man." The General, however, maintained that even the humble job of a porter was better than begging from the Assistance Board. Pride and ambition were the key to many success stories after the war. Another Polish officer spent his days cleaning toilets, but with the money he earned in one week he would survive for two thus

giving him the time to go to the library and educate himself. [33] Another Polish soldier was refused work in a biscuit factory because he was "too intelligent" to carry sacks of flour. Mieczysław Stelmaszyński spent nine years working as a junior clerk in a bank before moving to Canada where he opened a motel. [34]

Many British people misunderstood the determination of the first generation of Poles to make a success of life in Britain. The Poles became unpopular because they worked hard, especially if the job offered piecework. The harder the Poles worked the greater the rewards. They would start work early and, if they could, many would work through lunch. Most of the Poles had nothing so they needed the money; they were prepared to make sacrifices. The Poles preferred to work in non-Union enterprises as the high demand - high reward environment suited them; overtime was also readily accepted, not only to get extra money but also to kill the boredom of life. This conscientiousness in work had a negative reaction on their British work-mates who not only resented having traditional work norms exceeded but also resented the fact that the Poles soon had the money to buy cars and houses yet they, born and bred in Britain, could not. [35]

Jealousy led to all manner of wild accusation against the Poles, but in particular they were accused of 'spivvery'. Poles tended to dress better than the

British, possibly to convince the locals that they were not tramps or beggars - even the youths wore long trousers instead of the ubiquitous grey flannel shorts, which in turn would certainly lead to the epithet of 'spiv'. Ewa Lipniacka writes about the Polish sense of style in clothes: In Palestine Polish officers transformed that "sartorial monstrosity, the standard issue British Army tropical baggy shorts, into natty little bum-hugging numbers" [36] But it went beyond the look of the Poles.

Misunderstanding led to unhelpful comments such as Mr. Beswick's pronouncement in the Commons regarding spare time 'remunerative private business':

"Is it not the point that the whole of the time of these men is spare time, and is it not a fact that in these days, it is almost as rare to see a Polish Resettlement Officer without a bulging brief case as it used to be before the war to see an S.S. man in Berlin without a Mercedes Car." [37]

The 'fascist' analogy returned here to haunt the Poles with accusations of lawlessness. That is not to say that occurrences of criminality did not take place. Bronisław Dzikiewicz, formerly a Major in Italy, wrote at length on how the Poles managed to get past rationing:

"The Poles always seem to manage to get by in any situation. They started by buying ration coupons from the English for a shilling or two. There was suddenly a great rush in the clothes shops. After a while the English caught on that it was the Poles who were buying up great quantities of clothing material and so ruled that at the point of sale the whole book had to be shown and not just the coupon. But they managed to get round that too. Because it was so difficult to get hold of these books the Poles started to produce their own, and in the

relevant places filled in names and addresses taken from the phone book. The books sold like hot cakes. There was another great rush in the shops. It was a funny sight seeing a Pole, not knowing the language at all, and often dressed in Polish uniform, using a ration book made out in the name of a born Englishman. Then came the ruling that the owner of the book would have to prove that he was English. Thankfully the Poles had stocked up with all the goods they needed and besides they could always ask an English friend to go shopping with them. The 'sons of Albion' retained their sense of humour and willingly went along with the game." [38]

Even when the law was not being broken the Poles seemed to cope well. Dzikiewicz goes on that the resourcefulness of the Poles surprised even him. As soon as the news got around that somewhere something was being sold without coupons the Poles, not knowing any English at all, would be off by train. They even managed to cope with the fact that during the war all direction signs and the names of railway stations were removed. Getting around for foreigners was not easy but even so the Poles managed to get by. [39]

The occurrences of crime were not restricted to the petty day-to-day infringements of the black-market. According to Jerzy Potocki, the Second Corps had its share of problems as it approached its end. Although the over-all unity of the Corps was maintained, there were incidences of desertion, theft, robbery and even armed raids as discipline fell apart. Potocki speaks of currency rackets that were carried on in Italy and the two way transports using Army transport vehicles. Soldiers would ship olive oil from the South of Italy to

the North and would move clothes from the North to the South. In this way the lorries were always full. [40] Slepokora was also involved in this two way movement but he admits to moving machine parts South in return for olive oil to the North. This was the first way he and many Poles made their money. [41] This was not, however, a singularly Polish problem. Anyone who reads "Catch-22", Joseph Heller's fictional account of the American campaign in Italy, will see that war has the potential to make some people very wealthy.

The Poles in Britain also managed to get on the wrong side of the British by fighting their not-so-private war against Communism. One story made the press on the 30th July, 1946, when it was reported ...

"...that a number of Polish soldiers serving under His Majesty's command created a disturbance at a public meeting held at Edinburgh on 21st June, 1946, under the auspices of the British Council, presided over by the Lord Provost, when they insulted the Polish ambassador who was addressing the meeting, as a result of which they had to be removed by the Police." [42]

Rioting in the streets of Scotland was something guaranteed to create bad feelings among the locals. A report from the Scottish Office and Police painted a very negative view of the Poles in Scotland. The Foreign Office also received a copy and the following is the internal correspondence between Hancock and Robin Hankey of the FO.

Hancock: "I can't help feeling that this may be a rather partial report. The Police see the gloomy side of things. Personally I believe that, while

there may be many people in Scotland who dislike the Poles, there are also many who like them."

Hankey: "Possibly but our correspondence tends to confirm that these feelings of resentment are pretty widespread. And many responsible Poles such as Count Raczynski are seriously disturbed at the present state of feeling." [43]

The views of the Scottish Police were not shared by all Forces around the country. The Horsham Police in West Sussex went on the public record in 1948. In an article in a local newspaper entitled "A Bouquet for the Poles", Supt. Miller announced that "considering the large number of Poles we have in this district we get very little trouble from them." [44] Unless one lived in a town like Horsham with over 3,000 Poles stationed in its Council area then the Poles were not a daily feature. In Scotland the Poles were notable by their very visibility and numbers. In October 1946, in Scotland, there was one Pole to every 141 Scots: In England and Wales there was only one Pole to every 322 English and Welsh. [45] When the 2nd Corps was brought from Italy it was decided that most should not go to Scotland [see Appendix C] but would be spread around the rest of the United Kingdom. As Bevin put it, these "blessings" had to be shared around the country.

The War Office did not help the Polish case by forming the 1st Corps in Scotland. As a reserve Corps it was made up of 'deserters' from the German Army. The troops with whom such good relations had been built were

serving in North Germany as an army of occupation. General Maczek's 1st Armoured Division is remembered fondly by the Scots, but the new influx of "Germans" added fuel to the flames and gave credibility to the 'fascist' label.

According to Warsaw's military attache, Colonel Kuropieska, there were some 89,000 Poles recruited from the German Army.

1st Polish Corps

Recruited North Africa	:	2,000
Recruited from D-Day to end 1944	:	33,192
1st Jan. 1944 to End April 1945	:	15,439
May and June 1945	:	4,000

		54,631

2nd Polish Corps

Recruited up to June 1944	:	2,500
Recruited Second half of 1944	:	14,000
Recruited first half of 1945	:	18,000

		34,500

	=====	
Total :	89.131	[46]

The War Office gives a lower and more accurate breakdown of the "Germans" in the 1st Corps both at home and serving in the BAOR.

Ex-Wehrmacht + Todt

1st Armd Div (BAOR)	4,149 + 96 =	4,245 out of 15,000
1st Para Brig (BAOR)	1,984 + 55 =	2,039 out of 4,000
1st Corps (UK)		16,200 out of 30,000
	=====	=====
		22,484 out of 39,000

[47]

Certainly Kuropieska was in a position to know about the recruits from the German Army. Much to his surprise he discovered that all his staff had been chosen from a

Polish Repatriation Camp and that they had all, at one time or another, served in the Wehrmacht.

Kuropieska recounts a conversation he had with one of his staff who was not well disposed to the English:

"If the colonel only knew how we chased them, and now look at them; these layabouts! these upstarts!"

"But where did you chase them?"

"In Africa - we were with Rommel." [48]

It transpired that all his staff had been in the Afrika Korps until they were captured in 1942 and then joined the Polish Army. According to Kuropieska their pride in their former service was great and their behaviour with him was exemplary. All were subsequently repatriated to Poland.

The British Government was aware of the feeling that British public opinion might tolerate the Poles who had stood by them in the early war years, to ask them to accept the men who had at one time fought against their soldiers was pushing their good will. As more and more letters of protest came in, so the Foreign Office added a supplementary answer to the format answer [Appendix F] to calm public concern.

The Foreign Office attitude was that it would not be possible to discriminate against the ex-Wehrmacht Poles as it would be more trouble than it was worth. As Hankey minuted:

"I don't see you can make the distinction administratively effective. You have many categories:-

Poles who fought in Poland or France + were captured by Germans, put into Todt Orgn + escaped or were recaptured by us + fought for us.

Poles who did not fight in 1940 but ditto

Poles who served willingly or otherwise on E.Front + got out through Persia or Italy + fought for us.

Poles from labour camps who escaped + were enlisted but never fought against Gs.

etc.

etc.

There 's only one tidy distinction; did he serve in Polish A.F. under our command. Anything else produces a hurricane of favouritism, discrimination + complaints.

Besides, what do we do with the others? Deport them? And in British Uniform?

There'd be the whale of a howl. We'd better let this aspect rest. It's being worked up [...] for partisan purposes. RMAH 24/10/46" [49]

- : - : -

If it is possible to talk about being politically 'correct' then the Poles who were about to join British society were definitely running against the flow of the then current fashionable thought.

While in Italy the 2nd Corps was accused of all manner of anti-Communist activity. Many of the accusations were the work of Communist agitation. Italy after all turned very Leftist after the war. But many incidents did occur. In November of 1945 Anders felt compelled to issue an order to his senior officers that they should put an end to the attacks on Communists:

"I understand the negative feelings towards the representatives of Bierut's Government but I cannot, however, allow improper behaviour from my subordinates. The local Communist press and these very Bierut representatives instantly make the most of every such incident." [50]

Mieczysław Wacławski writes that while in Italy he attended a speech by the local Communist delegate who got as far as "Citizens of Alessano..." before being showered in a hail of rotten Polish tomatoes and oranges. Another group of Poles at the same time overturned the delegate's car in front of the Church. [51]

Colonel Sidor lists 195 separate incidents taken from the Italian press, ranging from shoplifting to the rape and murder of a woman reported in "Il Giornale della Sera" of 29th November, 1946. [52] Even given Sidor's bias it cannot be denied that certain events did occur - and not always started by the Poles. In a report to the Chief of Staff, Colonel Skoczen of the Polish Military Police lists the most serious incidents from January 1945 to September 1946 including a fight in Senigallia between the Poles and Italian Communists - an Italian, Mario Balducci, died of his wounds. A Polish Sapper on the other hand was shot by Germano Germolini for trying to remove a Communist Party poster. [53]

These sort of events did not go unnoticed in Britain, and agitation by British Communists made sure it would not be missed. Hankey of the FO was aware of this and wrote to the War Office in that respect:

"I may add in parenthesis that I doubt if the 2nd Corps have been guilty of more than a fraction of the things imputed to them for political motives by their adversaries, but I would not care to put my last shirt on it owing to their undoubtedly strong bias." [54]

The Polish Armed Forces rapidly gained the reputation among the British as being vehemently opposed to the Communists and anti-Russian, no surprise to anyone who knew their history. The Polish way of thinking did not endear them to the many British who supported the Russians after the war. According to "The Sunday Times", in August 1945, eight hundred Polish soldiers decided to boycott the Scottish border town of Peebles and not fraternise with the local population because the local Council had asked the Government to send them all back to Poland. Councillor John Mackay described them as "big, lusty fellows with nothing to do while their own country needs them badly." Mrs Kathleen Chapman from Sheffield was so inspired by the Peebles story that she wrote to Bevin in support of the Scots:

"We have given them sanctuary in our country for 4½ years now and it is time they were back in Poland, great lusty fellows simply idling about with nothing to do (but frat with our girls) while Poland needs them now. I am sure you will regret it if you do not act boldly and sensibly and order them to return, they are all without exception anti-Russian and have no good word for our fine brave allies."[55]

The reaction of the British public was to some extent determined by their attitude towards the Soviet Union. Those who believed the, not inconsiderable, propaganda that the Soviets were the friends of all workers tended to look at the Poles, who seemed to be their main critics at the time, with animosity. Those who

took a more pragmatic, and with hindsight we can say a more realistic view of the Soviet Union, tended to look at the Poles with sympathy as victims of an injustice and a hostile campaign of misinformation.

Vice—Admiral Taylor, in another of his staunch defences of Polish interests in the Commons, put forward his ideas on why the Poles were not going to return to Poland:

"The hon. Member for Hackney (Mr.N.Hynd) said that the main object of the Government was to get the Poles to go back to Poland. If conditions in Poland were entirely different from what they are - I refer to the Communist set-up - and the administration were changed so that these people could go back, they would not require any pushing. They are all most anxious to return to their own country. There is no nation which is so patriotic; no nation which loves their country more than the Poles. They do not need any urging to go back; but how is it possible for the Poles to go back to Poland under the conditions which exist there today?"

Mr. Ben Levy then asked if it was so bad why were 250 Poles returning every week? Admiral Taylor continued:

"Some of them are going back to Poland, of course, that is a fact, but the vast majority of Poles here will not return to their homeland under the conditions which exist there. [...] The Government is Communist, and anyone who opposed the Communist regime in Poland is looked upon as a fascist, a reactionary, and a traitor to his country, and is dealt with accordingly if he goes back to Poland. Under these conditions, how do hon. Members consider that the Poles should go back to Poland." [56]

Admiral Taylor was not alone in feeling that more could, and should, be done for the Poles. As Mrs Short wrote to the Foreign Office in August, 1945:

"I have seen what the Poles have suffered during this war, and I have seen their pathetic loyalty and faith in England and England's honour - a faith which has, to our everlasting shame, not been justified. In every quarter our enemies are being better treated than our most faithful Ally - Poland." [57]

The Poles felt this acutely, and knew that they were losing the battle of hearts and minds for public sympathy. As one soldier in Italy wrote:

"I am sorry that the majority of the English people prefer not to see the truth. Perhaps it is more convenient for them at the moment to be blind and dumb, but to lean on a lie is rather dangerous." [58]

The Labour Party in Britain - front benches excluded - had swung to the extreme Left. The Hendon Branch of the Party put forward the following resolution at the 1946 Labour Party Conference:

"This Conference is of the opinion that world peace can only be based on a British policy directed to ensure firm friendship and co-operation with the progressive forces throughout the world, and in particular with the U.S.S.R. [...] The Conference therefore calls upon the Government (a) to maintain and foster an attitude of sympathy and friendship towards the Soviet Union, ...and (b) to repudiate Mr. Churchill's defeatist proposal to make the British Commonwealth a mere satellite of American Monopoly Capitalism which will inevitably lead to our being aligned in a partnership of hostility to Russia." [59]

The question of this mass of pro-Soviet goodwill must be on whose inspiration did it come about?

The British press came in for some criticism of its partiality and balance. George Orwell, a writer more in tune with reality than many of his contemporaries, wrote

the following remarkably accurate piece in "Tribune", on the 1st September, 1944:

"I cannot discuss here why it is that the British intelligentsia, with few exceptions, have developed a nationalistic loyalty towards the U.S.S.R., and are dishonestly uncritical of its policies.... But I would like to close with two considerations which are worth thinking over.

First of all a message to English Left-Wing journalists and intellectuals generally. Do remember that dishonesty and cowardice always have to be paid for. Don't imagine that for years on end you can make yourself the boot-licking propagandist of the Soviet regime, or any other regime, and then suddenly return to mental decency. Once a whore, always a whore.

Secondly, a wider consideration. Nothing is more important in the world to-day than Anglo-Russian friendship and co-operation, and that will not be attained without plain speaking. The best way to come to an agreement with a foreign nation is not to refrain from criticising its policies, even to the extent of leaving your own people in the dark about them. At present, so slavish is the attitude of nearly the whole British press that ordinary people have very little idea of what is happening, and may well be committed to policies which they will repudiate in five years time." [60]

Hugh Trevor-Roper, writing the introduction to Bethell's

"Last Secret", is even more specific:

"Nevertheless, in the West, where public opinion was powerful, the alliance of necessity had to be represented as an understanding, a sympathy between peoples of similar ideals. By 1944 British propaganda had for three years recorded the sufferings and extolled the heroism of the Russian people. It had concealed the true character of the Russian government. It had suggested that its aims were similar to our own. Thereby it had created a public attitude towards that government which made possible, and even acceptable, certain great betrayals." [61]

The cartoons reproduced as appendices H and I show how over the course of the war attitudes changed towards the "fine brave ally". In 1939, after the invasion of Poland,

but in particular during the Soviet-Finnish war, the main current was that both the Nazis and the Soviets used similar methods and to the same ends. The images, whether the 'Russian Bodysnatcher' or the 'Gorilla Ambassador', are strong and negative. By 1945 the images had become more heroic: it was now the desire to support the Soviet Union. Past events had been reassessed and it became "...worthwhile to review the military aspects of the war from the Russian standpoint, in order to give its history more objectively and to correct earlier impressions."

[62] What this meant in reality was that according to the press, the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939 was not the 'stab in the back' that was claimed at the time. In Finland it was claimed that Stalin was fully justified in seeking safe defensive borders, whereas at the time maps were being published to ask the British public how they would feel if asked to cede Southampton, the Isle of White, parts of Norfolk and the Orkney Isles to a foreign power.

The new, pro-Soviet, way of thinking was the reason the Poles found it so difficult to convince the British public of the validity of their arguments. The Poles were well aware that they were losing the propaganda war, and they knew why. Tadeusz Modelski wrote, of the British public:

"They [the Poles] also ignored the farcical buffoonery and lies of "The Daily Worker" correspondent in Moscow, Harold King, who wrote: "The Soldiers of the Second Polish Corps who want to

fight together shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army are prosecuted, tortured and disappear without trace." I can assure my readers that no Pole who experienced the hell of Soviet captivity would want to go to Russia again to fight together with the Soviet Army, shoulder to shoulder. They were embittered by the venomous comments of the British press on the left towards the rightful Polish Government in London. This press declared support for "our Russian allies' territorial and political demands in Poland" and demanded that a "sharp hygienic process" was necessary against "our ungrateful friends", meaning the Polish Government which did not want to give Stalin one-third of Polish territory or be signatory for depriving Poland of its freedom and independence." [63]

The adverse attitude of the press was noticed not just by the Poles. As the protest letters from the British public flooded into the Foreign Office, Waterfield, one of the clerks there, commented:

"Many are from the Kircaldy area of Scotland. In general they are bitter and show an ignorance of the facts which a reading of the daily papers would prevent. There is no diminution in the am[oun]t of the correspondence." [64]

The point Waterfield seemed to miss was that elements of the British press appeared to have their own agenda in dealing with Polish matters. "The News Chronicle", for example, misquoted one of Chuter Ede's statements to the Commons in March, 1947. He actually said that: "Isolated individuals previously connected with the Polish Forces have been actively associated with black market operations in London." It was reported in the paper as: "Many Poles have been actively engaged in the black market in London." [65] A not very subtle change that only added fuel to the flames.

The case of the "Polish Dachau" was one story that

gained international notoriety. In June 1945 "Pravda" reported that the Poles had set up a "concentration camp at Inverkeithing" in Scotland. It was alleged that hundreds of thousands of Poles were being held there, many of them in chains. The next day the Poles opened the camp to reporters. The War Office confirmed that there were in fact only 53 prisoners in the camp all of whom had been sentenced by Courts Martial and were not political offenders. "The Daily Telegraph" reported that although conditions were not good it was not a concentration camp - the 'chains' were in fact British issue restraints used for more "obstreporous prisoners". "The Daily Sketch" was criticised by the FO for ignoring the facts and concentrating on the more "lurid" aspects of the story. "The Daily Worker", "as might be expected", followed the "Pravda" line without question. There was some concern that even the BBC released the "Pravda" story without comment. This in turn led to a complaint from Count Raczynski and hurried editorials from the World Service and some time later on the Home Service. [66]

Some of the reports in the British press were fanciful to say the least. One story, taken as fact by "The Daily Herald" and "The Scotsman" as they originated from a Reuters release, claimed that the Polish officers murdered at Katyn were all former prisoners from Sachsenhausen. According to Erik Johansen, a Norwegian

who had been in the concentration camp since 1941, the bodies had been taken from the camp and put in Polish uniforms. The Germans had a Jewish team forge and 'age' the documents that were then planted on the bodies and to remove witnesses the Jews were then liquidated. Even in 1945 the story seemed unlikely yet it was just what people who wanted to believe the best of "our fine brave ally" wanted to hear. [67]

As early as January 1943, Douglas Reed wrote in "Time and Tide" that:

"The British people...ask each other, what is this trend in the war that causes the Press suddenly to attack all our friends, all those who bore the brunt of the fight "against Nazi aggression.

Unhappily the people can only look to the Press for their information, and this leads me to say (as I hope you will allow me to say) that, in all my experience I have never known (not even in Germany or other dictatorship States) the picture of affairs in foreign countries to be so falsified in presentation to the reading public, as is the picture of Poland, Yugoslavia and Greece in the information laid before the British people by the radio and the Press to-day. It is hypocrisy to assert that any freedom of the Press exists in this country to-day, while, in the matter of these three countries, the future of which affects us as closely and vitally as did that of Czecho-Slovakia in 1938, some secret ban has quite clearly been laid on the publication of authentic information." [68]

The notion of a conspiracy to gag the Press is not strictly the case, at least once hostilities were over, but questions about the unrepresentative nature of Press coverage should be asked. The Foreign Office was "seriously concerned" about the "quality of correspondent" in Poland:

"The only good man is, I understand, the Sunday Times man, Mr. Selby and he has been expelled. Mr. Cang who represents The Times and Manchester Guardian, is financed and housed in suspicious circumstances apparently by the Polish Government and cannot be relied upon to send independent reports. Many of his reports are obviously inspired by a desire to conciliate the present Communist regime. The Reynolds News man is a [?-word unclear] Indian of Communist tendencies. The Economist representative is also a fellow traveller. The Reuter string man is known to be a Communist. This state of affairs is completely unworthy of the British Press and even the B.B.C. now has to rely partly on quotations from the American Press for its Polish service." [69]

The Foreign Office was fully aware of the capacity for those who "stank of fellow travellership a mile off" to influence events as well as just reporting them. [70] The 1946 referendum, the results of which are covered in chapter four, was reported in "The Times" in the following manner:

"3 Times Yes

Polling here to-day in the referendum, in which the Polish Government seeks approval on three main points of policy, went quietly with every appearance that the machinery of voting was being fairly operated." [71]

More a question of hope over truth. Similarly in August of 1945 there was a report in "The Times" about three Poles who had been arrested by the Polish Forces in Britain and put in Polkemmet Camp, West Lothian. According to "The Times" they had been disarmed and put into old German uniforms. Apparently the reason for their arrest was that they had expressed a view to returning to Poland. [72] The article was recognised by the Foreign Office as being untrue and part of a Communist

anti-Polish agitation campaign, but the problem was how to stop such clearly partial reporting. Such were the joys of a 'free' Press.

The biggest problem the Poles had in trying to convince British public opinion was the fact that the British **wanted** to believe the best about Moscow and its intentions after the war. Since 1941, and the German attack on the Soviet Union, the British propaganda machine had been fostering happy thoughts about their 'gallant ally' and these feelings could not be switched off over night.

Michael Charlton conducted the following interview with Lord Gladwyn, who was, in 1946, the Acting Secretary General of the United Nations:

Charlton: "Do you agree that those who influenced our policy (and perhaps yourself included) were on the whole too optimistic?"

Gladwyn: Possibly, yes. But I think in view of public opinion, particularly in America, but also in England, it was difficult to be anything else. If you'd given the impression that you were not trying to come to some kind of agreement of a reasonable nature with the Russians there'd have been a revolt in the House of Commons and in the nation generally - certainly in the army.

Charlton: Why do you say that: "...certainly in the army?"

Gladwyn: Well the army, after all, was very left-wing on the whole, as was shown by the elections in 1945. I think they thought that we were fighting for democracy, and they had certain illusions about the Russians - 'the gallant ally'.

Charlton: But surely those illusions were fostered by those who influenced our policy with the

constant suppression, or covering up, of information which might have led public opinion to a different conclusion?

Gladwyn: It may have been. But, on the other hand, if we hadn't done something to foster the idea of 'the gallant ally' some people would have said that the Russians might have made a separate deal with Hitler. You see, that was the idea."
[73]

As many popular misconceptions abounded with regards to the new regime in Warsaw as about the nature of the Soviet Union. It was believed by many that a revolution had taken place with the support of the people and that the stories emanating from the Poles in the West were the lies of expropriated landowners who had personal or financial reasons for opposing the government of 'peasants and workers'. In a book, remarkable only in its blind devotion to the Communist line, W.P. and Zelda Coates wrote a history of Russo-Polish relations. The book was published in 1948, just as Polish Stalinization was moving up a gear, and with that in mind the ideas expressed seem out of touch with reality:

"There can be little doubt that a Polish Government whose power rests on the people and which considers the interests of the latter paramount, a Government which knows how to interest the masses of workers and peasants in the economic and cultural development of the country will not repeat the mistakes still less the crimes of the old Polish Pans, but will maintain the independence of the country, promote the welfare of its people and lead it from strength to strength." [74]

Nearly fifty years and the fall of the Communist regime later, it is difficult to believe that someone once believed in these words. Yet believed they were, and by

more than a few people. As one Polish Officer in Italy wrote, in 1944:

"I have made one observation analysing all events, that an Englishman sees what he wants to see and manages to close his eyes if it is more convenient for him to do so." [75]

It would be unfair to give the impression that everyone in the field of influencing public opinion was so blindly pro-Soviet and pro-Communist. Despite the criticism of "The Economist's" Warsaw correspondent, quoted earlier, the Journal as a whole was no friend of the Left. The following criticism of the Engineering Union comes from February of 1949:

"The AEU's recent decision to reverse its policy of refusing or expelling Polish refugee workers deserves notice and welcome - even if couched only in the phrase "And high time too!" The dog-in-the-manger meanness of the original decision may probably be attributed less to the natural attitude of the AEU membership, who are doubtless no more selfish or stupid than other people, than to the vindictiveness of the Communist element among them. The defeat of that element is certainly an added reason for congratulation." [76]

Even more remarkable than this is "The Economist's" criticism of the entire thrust of British post-war foreign policy towards Poland. In reviewing Jan Ciechanowski's "Defeat in Victory" "The Economist's" reviewer wrote:

"The tale of the acts of British and American policy towards Poland in the later years of the war adds up to a record of gross treachery. Yet it was not, as the policy of the Kremlin clearly was, a process premeditated and calculated from the beginning. First Mr Churchill, and later President Roosevelt also, slid gradually down the slippery slope of dishonour like the embezzler who starts by really intending to pay back the money he takes." [77]

Perhaps the above account has given a very negative view of the public reaction to the Poles and certainly not everyone in Britain opposed their arrival in the UK. The Roman Catholic hierarchy welcomed the Polish Forces. The Archbishop of Westminster, Dr Griffin, was quoted in "The Daily Telegraph" in July, 1945:

"The overwhelming majority of Poles outside Poland are unwilling to go back to Poland as it is now. We understand and we assure those who stay that they are altogether welcome among us." [78]

In June 1946 the "Joint Committee of Welcome for Polish Forces" was set up with Lt.Gen. Sir Noel Mason Macfarlane as its proposed chairman, but due to ill health the Duchess of Atholl had to stand in. The vice-chairman was Professor W.J.Rose of the University of London's School of Slavonic and East European Studies. This body of public figures and intellectuals distributed cards to arriving troops welcoming them to Britain and wishing them well for the future and luck in reconstructing Britain. [79] It should also be pointed out that not all the Trades Unions opposed helping the Poles into the labour market. The Transport and General Workers Union did much to help Poles. The TGWU had a full-time organising Secretary of All-Polish Union branches so that by 1949 there were 6,000 members of the Union plus many more who were in local 'British' branches. The Union also organised Sunday Schools to introduce Poles to British Unionism and to highlight available means of language tuition and further education for those who wanted it. As Mrs McKay, TGWU

Secretary for branch 1333 wrote to "The Polish Daily" in April 1950:

"A Polish worker who helps in the task of social reconstruction of Britain, serves his country as well: he gains a valuable experience which he will use to the best advantage of his country when the hour of liberation strikes." [80]

However, as with most protests, the majority of letters and articles came from people who had a particular 'axe to grind'. Although the Foreign Office received a mass of letters denouncing the Poles as 'fascists', many leading politicians voiced concern at this public attitude. As early as 1944 Ernest Bevin defended the Poles at the Labour Party Conference:

"People have stood on the rostrum this week and said that the Poles are fascists. Some are. I knew General Sikorski, no one will tell me he was a fascist. Neither is Mikolajczyk nor the Polish Socialist Party. Hurling epithets at one another will not do." [81]

Yet the popular idea that the Poles were fascists and reactionaries remained. Despite the many letters of protest it is difficult to generalise that most of the British public objected to the Poles. MPs like Mr. Gallacher, Communist member for Fife West, were in favour of forced repatriation. He pronounced that a revolution in Poland had taken place: "The days of Tsardom have gone and the days of political and religious persecution have gone" [82]. Gallacher declared that if it were up to him he would "...be prepared to use that power and authority to put these men back into their own country." In other words he would force the Poles back at

gun-point. It is fairly certain that this was very much a minority view and went against the idea of 'fair play'.

H. Foster Anderson, on a 1946 trip to Poland, put forward his notions of British public opinion:

"I think," I said, "I ought to tell you the views of the ordinary man in England about the Poles. He knows that there is some sort of domestic quarrel between you here in Poland and the Poles outside. He is not clear what it is all about and he is not particularly interested. But he knows that when England stood alone, Polish airmen fought by our side in the Battle of Britain and throughout the war the soldiers, sailors and airmen of Poland fought side by side with our men. He wants the Poles to go back home but if they feel they cannot, he does not want them to be forced to go back to Poland." [83]

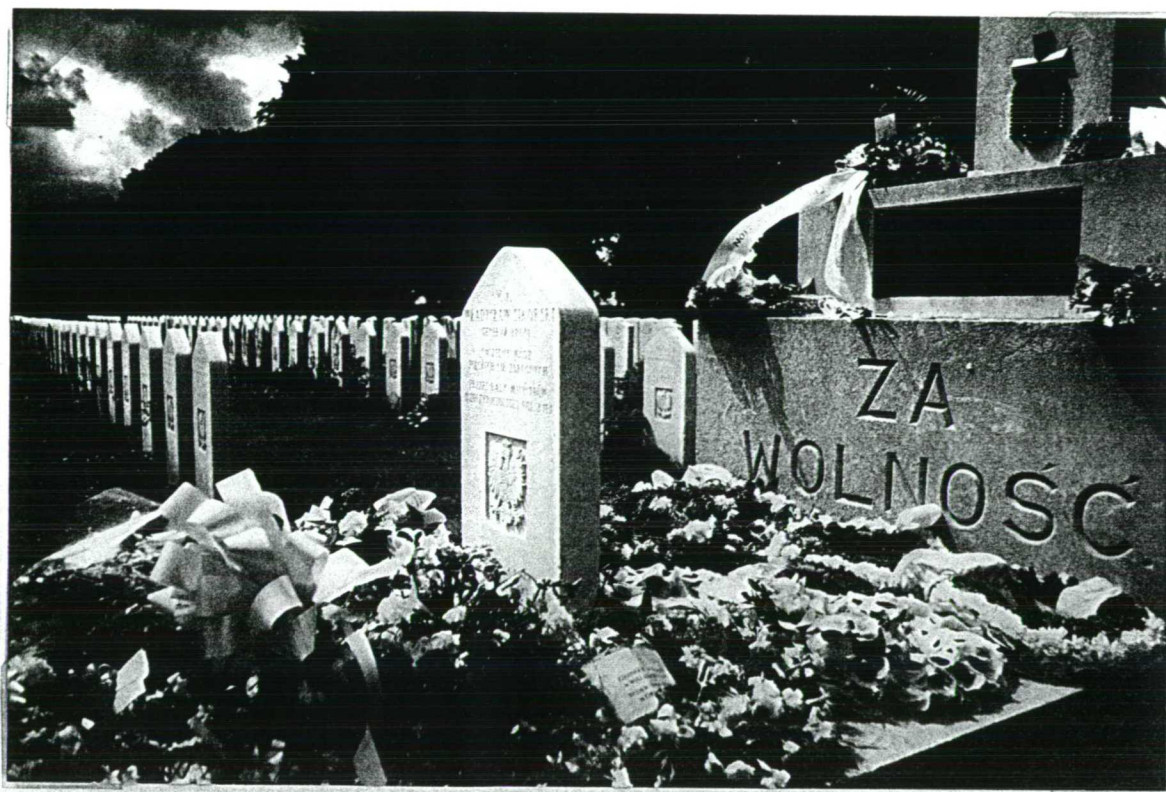
This probably sums up quite accurately what the majority of the British public was thinking. It failed to answer the question of where the Poles would live if they would not return to Poland. Even the most well meaning of Britons might think twice if he found a Polish Division camping on his door-step. Yet by the time the Poles had arrived from Italy and Germany much of the damage had been done. Opinions had been forming for some time and if the integration of the Poles was to work then it would take hard work on both sides as an article in "The Polish Daily" explained:

"It is a fact that the British public looks with some anxiety on the arrival of the Second Corps and it is also a fact that for the Polish Soldiers from Italy this country represents only one stage in their journey - and that a stage full of bitterness. Much work on both sides during the next weeks and months will be required to overcome the fears of the British public, to do away with the bitterness on the Polish side and to secure that what is now happening may be profitable to Polish British friendship." [84]

CHAPTER SEVEN

**"An Honour To Have Such Faithful And Valiant
Warriors Dwelling Among Us."**

The British Government Plans To Support The Poles.



"For Freedom...!"

General Sikorski Among His Tourists.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The realisation in the corridors of Whitehall that Britain would be left with the responsibility of looking after many thousands of Poles led to an air of resignation that tempered the feeling of moral obligation to which the British Government had originally subscribed. The first problem the Foreign Office found was the need to define who, from the hundreds of thousands of Polish citizens across Europe, wearing Polish uniform, were eligible for their help.

By the end of the Second World War, it has been estimated that 38% of the overall foreign work-force in the German Reich was made up of Poles. The Nazis had incorporated some 92,000 Km² into Greater Germany and despite mass population transfers out of these areas and the hurried planting of 'Aryan' settlers from Germany, there were around 2,500,000 Poles living in the Reich.

After 1939 the German Occupation forces held some 460,000 Polish POWs including 19,000 officers. When the Germans occupied Rumania and Hungary this number rose by a further 8,000 as the Poles interned there were also captured. By 1944 some of these Poles were allowed to go home - most were not. 400,000 POWs had their status changed to 'civilian labourers' so that they could fill

up the slave labour camps that flourished across occupied Europe. 57,000 Poles remained as POWs, including 17,000 officers and after the ill-fated Warsaw Rising this number rose by another 20,000.

The system of Stalags [Mannschaftsstellager] for NCOs and other ranks was spread across Europe; Polish officers on the other hand were concentrated in six Oflag [Offizierslager]: Woldenburg IIc, Grossborn IID, Frie-Sack IIId, Doessel VIb, Murnau VIIa and Luebeck Xc. Although Colditz IVc had not been used as a regular Oflag for Poles since 1943, its position as a 'Special Camp' or 'Sonderlager' meant that many Polish "Prominente" were held there, particularly after the Warsaw Rising when, among others, General Komorowski was held there. [1]

Given the massive number of soldiers and former soldiers who had a claim on being members of the "Polish Armed Forces" an immediate problem presented itself to the British Foreign Office who had the task of resettling Polish troops who refused to return to Poland, namely, who to count and who to exclude from these provisions.

The precept chosen was that only Polish troops who had served under British command would be eligible for help. This would exclude most of the POWs from 1939 in Germany and it would also exclude most of the AK who had been captured in 1944. However, the British authorities quickly found out that the Poles were not playing by the same rules as they were.

Once the POW camps were liberated, there was very little to stop Poles drifting to their nearest Polish unit and enlisting into the very British commanded units that they were supposed to have been excluded from, and this is just what they did. The Polish High Command was only too eager to accept this growth in its manpower, particularly since it was the only way these soldiers were going to get any help from the British Government.

Even during hostilities, the Foreign Office was showing concern that the Polish military establishment was growing beyond what was needed and that SHAEF [Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force] was actively encouraging this growth:

"The Poles... seem to be making another back-door attempt to expand their armed forces over and above current operational needs, which we have agreed form the only possible criteria so long as the Polish political question is unsolved. The Shaef paper in N895 is rather alarming. I suggest we should be on our guard against Shaef's letting us in for an increase in the Polish forces not justified by current needs.

Shaef may seek to argue that they alone are the judge of what they want. But it is we who will have to carry the baby and as we are $\frac{1}{2}$ of the CCS [Combined Chiefs of Staff] who must approve Shaef's schemes we can hold the situation.

SHAEF will disappear in due course and HMG in the UK will be left with the problem of repatriating or otherwise disposing of these unfortunate Poles." [2]

The War Office issued a memo to the FO trying to clarify an otherwise confused situation. If it was agreed that a limit had to be placed on the Polish forces, then a date would have to be given after which enlistment

would not be considered. The War Office admitted that the date should have been the 31st May, 1945 but in Italy official enlistment had ended on the 2nd October. In Germany it had been even later - the 12th, and in France the situation had been so confused that there had been no official date given. The Foreign Office decided that the date for Germany should be accepted across the board but as Hancock of the FO added:

"In doing this we must, however, realise that the Poles have in effect bounced us. Nevertheless, I think that it would be difficult and rather unfair and unduly rigid to adopt either of the previous dates suggested." [3]

This, of course, did not stop the Poles from continued recruitment. According to the FO, General Anders and General Morgan did not know what to do with the "steady trickle" of Poles arriving at 2 Polcorps. It was reported that even the pilot bringing ambassador Kot to Italy from Poland defected on his arrival. The WO was told to:

"Instruct AFHQ to ensure that recruitment into two Polish Corps does not continue, on however small a scale." [4]

Members of the former AK would not be allowed to join the Resettlement Corps, yet there was still confusion over the question of 'British command'. Some Poles had been sent from Britain to join the AK as part of SOE operations, some Poles from the AK were in Britain and all the members of the AK were under the command of the Polish Government that was in Britain and were considered by the Poles as being part of the Polish Armed Forces.

The FO reiterated that the only members of the AK who would be allowed into the PRC would be ones who had been in the UK prior to the 1st July, 1946 - and they admitted that that was only because the WO had assured them that the number involved would be less than 100. The FO did make provision for that small number of civilians sent abroad by SOE - on a discretionary basis - but it was that very civilian nature of the Home Army that precluded admission for most. Even General Komorowski was "designedly" excluded as he was considered a civilian "with no official status" despite being officially appointed as the C-in-C Polish Armed Forces. [5]

The fact that so many Poles were left in Germany after the war was viewed with unease by both Britain and Poland. The British disapproved because they, along with the US Government and to a lesser extent the French Government, would have to foot the bill for the Poles in their respective zones of occupation. The Polish Government in Warsaw disapproved of the situation because so many Poles concentrated in so small an area could foment trouble for the new regime. Certainly, Warsaw suspected the intentions of the Control Commission in Germany and of UNRRA. As far as they were concerned, the former POWs [PWX to use the War Office terminology] and the DPs were a hotbed of counter-revolution. As one PUR report stated:

"With regards to the repatriation of Poles, more or less up to the Middle of 1946, the Western Occupation Authorities, with the tacit agreement of UNRRA, were admitting the possibility of a change in the Polish policy and so wanted to maintain a cadre of people who would take over the political life of Poland. With the support of Polish military formations stationed at that time in Germany they used their newly formed watchmen companies to create a military and political apparatus for Poland that was dominated by right-wing elements. In the full knowledge of the occupation authorities these units - in particular the Swietokrzyska Brigade and the Deuxième Bureau of the 1st Armd. Division - supported the active operations of the Polish Underground, supplying them with instructions, money, arms and liaising abroad with foreign intelligence services." [6]

Although somewhat overstated, the power of the Polish 'Dwójka' should not be underestimated. Colonel Gano's intelligence network had posts across Europe but more importantly there was a large network in Poland itself, with the largest going under the code-name of 'Pralnia II'. This network, like all the others working for the Polish O.II were supposed to have been shut down after the war but both the Warsaw authorities and the British Government suspected otherwise. [7]

The Poles in the West had been in radio communication with Poland throughout the war. From their cipher and transmitter centre at Woldingham in Surrey they were outdistancing the British Secret Service with the electronic devices they produced and according to one source, "...pushed all other existing devices to the status of museum pieces." [8] Much to the chagrin of the British, the Poles continued to broadcast their anti-

Communist message to the old country, particularly from secret bases in Italy. Most of the files covering this aspect of Polish undercover work remain closed to the public but from the little that is available it would appear that Britain's MI6 were monitoring Polish radio broadcasts to Poland. When the Poles set up a "wireless school" in Rome the move did not convince the Foreign Office who obviously gave instructions to AFHQ to keep an eye on what was going on. On the 16th October, 1945, AFHQ ciphered this enigmatic message to the Foreign Office:

"My telegram No.1866

Station did not transmit yesterday

2. The mobile unit will continue to lie in wait.

Foreign Office please repeat to Warsaw as my telegram No.10" [9]

This was passed to General Sugden, Director of Military Operations and to "C" (the secretive General Stewart Menzies, Head of MI6). As well as two-way radio traffic, the Poles also had Radio "Fighting Poland" that broadcast the word according to the exiles. BBC Monitoring picked up its broadcast on September 10th, 1947:

"Its entire tone was anti-Soviet and, to some extent anti-Semitic. In a talk on "who rules Poland?" most of the members of the Polish Politburo were mentioned either as Soviet citizens or Jews, or as having been Soviet-trained. Poland's rulers were said to have been forced upon the country by the USSR." [10]

The security aspects of this situation were not wasted in London and Warsaw. The agents of a government no longer recognised by HMG were inciting 'counter-revolution' in

an allied state, the government of which was recognised by HMG. The implications were far reaching and it was for this reason that the British security apparatus was brought to bear on the Poles in the West.

Colonel Kuropieska questioned the Foreign Office in October, 1946, about the Polish Ex-Combatant Society [SPK] that had recently formed in Britain, seeing it as a new source of conflict between Warsaw and the British. The FO was equally anxious to establish the true nature of the SPK and planned to infiltrate its leadership but, as this might prove difficult, they settled for an investigation by MI5. The Home Army Association was investigated by Special Branch for much the same reasons. The Polish Forces in the West would not be allowed to become a nest of subversion. [11]

The security aspects of controlling the Poles became more serious with the demobilisation of the military structure that bound so many men together. Since the Poles were no longer under the 1940 Allied Forces Act, there was no legal sanction if a Pole chose to absent himself from his unit. How could the British keep control in the Resettlement Corps?

If the Poles were considered as possible subversives this was nothing compared to British views of the "Palestine Group", a group of 245 Jewish Poles expressing a desire to go to Palestine. The War Office viewed this new headache with unrestrained horror. Since the increase

of Jewish terrorist activity, culminating in July, 1946, in the King David Hotel massacre in Jerusalem, Britain had been put on the alert for Jewish extremists in the UK. Armed guards had been assigned to the homes of ministers, and staff at Westminster were warned about parcel bombs, so the prospect of bringing 245 highly trained Jews to Britain was viewed with some apprehension. Bombs and murders coloured many attitudes in the War Office; Colonel Balfour of the WO wrote to Crawford of the Control Office for Germany regarding "...illegal Jewish immigrants and potential terrorists however noisy and whatever their backing from elsewhere" [12]. When the "Palestine Group" was to be brought to the UK, the Home Office advised keeping them as far from London as possible. The War Office, keen to comply, chose Thurso a mere 651 miles from London. Although they were to be held there for security reasons at a joint meeting:

"...it was also agreed that NO mention of Jewish terrorist activities would be made, and that the reason given for the separation of the "PALESTINE GROUP", and their dispatch to THURSO, would be that it was administratively convenient to have these Poles in one camp and that the camp selected was at THURSO." [13]

After the Foreign Office covered up the banishment of these Polish Jews to the farthest corner of the island, they decided that the group would have no leave for two weeks in order to give MI5 a chance to investigate them and when leave did come through, then the Home Office, War

Office, MI5 and MI11 [Directorate of Field Security] all wanted to know about it.

The problems surrounding the Resettlement Corps did not end with the question of who to admit. There seems to have been some confusion over what to call the Corps. The Foreign Office wanted to use the title: **Polish Industrial Settlement Corps** to "...emphasise its essentially civilian character". The Treasury preferred to use the word **Resettlement** as the word "settlement" had "...a more permanent ring". The Home Office was not keen on the use of **Polish** but they let that go, their principle objection was to the term **Industrial** given that most of the Poles would end up working in agriculture - the synthesis of the three views was the **Polish Resettlement Corps**. [14]

The Polish name for the Corps did not come any easier for the promoters of the idea. Kuropieska writes of exiled President Raczkiewicz talking about the **Polski Przemysłowy Korpus Osiedleńczy** - Bevin's idea of the Polish Industrial Settlement Corps [15] - but the Polish version was as short-lived as the English one. At a meeting on the 25th June, 1946, some of the notables concerned with Polish issues met to muse over a Polish name for the Corps. One suggestion put forward was to call it the **Korpus Przysposobienia Do Zawodów Cywilnych** [Training for Civilian Labour Corps] but the meeting decided that this title was too long and although they

tried to compromise with **Przysposobienie Cywilne** [Civilian Training], it was decided that the phrase was bad Polish and, in any case, the Ministry Of Labour was against vocational training for the Poles and so wanted the term for 'training' [przysposobienie] dropped.

As to the Resettlement part of the title the **Korpus Osiedlenczy** [Settlement Corps] was suggested but rejected by General Kopański as it implied that the Poles would all be planted "...as a body in one place." Frank Savery in his notes given to Hankey highlights the conclusion of the meeting:

"Somebody - [Józef] Lipski, I think - then suggested "Polski Korpus Przysposobienia i Rozmieszczenia". [Polish Corps of Training and Distribution] This seemed to me excellent and [Brigadier] Davy agreed when I explained to him that "Rozmieszczenie" connoted the dotting of people about in various places, half a dozen here and nine there." [16]

The Polish initials P.K.P.R. were quickly twisted by some cynical Poles to "Póki Król Płaci Regularnie" or "While the King Pays Regularly" and it was in this spirit most joined the Polish Resettlement Corps. [17] As Hankey was the first to admit, many Poles considered the Corps as an alternative to returning to Poland. "We must make it clear this is not so. It's only an alternative to chaos!" [18]

If the PRC was to work smoothly and efficiently, then careful consideration would have to be given to the quality of leadership and the structure the Corps followed. The Polish generals would have to have some

input and nominally be in charge but there were limits to how much control the Poles would be allowed. As Hankey minuted:

"In general it will probably produce the best results if we can give the Polish generals the impression they are being consulted + invited to advise + assist." [19]

This did not help to allay the fears of the Warsaw Poles, already suspicious that the Corps was to be run along military rather than civilian lines. As Colonel Sidor noted:

"It is clear to us that the PRC is an organisation created to prevent return to Poland, especially when we consider that the leaders of this organisation are officers favoured by Anders" [20]

As was often the case, Sidor overstated the situation. Far from keeping the PRC to further Anders' control over the Poles, the Foreign Office was endeavouring to find some tactful way of removing the bothersome General from any influence at all. Having come so close to relieving him from command earlier, they were certainly not going to have him as the officer commanding the Resettlement Corps. The political advisor to SACMED put forward the idea of giving Anders a "...Roving Commission where his messianic qualities can be put to good use with the minimum of embarrassment to HMG." [21] The Polish Forces Committee on the 1st August, 1946, speculated that "we should like to see him go to America" [22] There was still the question of how to control Anders after his demobilisation and to prevent him from making the

political mischief that, in the eyes of the British, he was apt to do. Brigadier Pyman of the WO thought financial blackmail might do the trick:

"I can only suggest that before General Anders is retired, he is given a warning that he is not to take part in political activities which might embarrass the policy of HM Government. If he is found to be taking part in any undesirable political activity we can always threaten to withdraw his pension." [23]

As an alternative to Anders, the Polish Forces Committee put forward the Polish Chief of Staff Stanisław Kopański who was, in their view, a moderate man and a "...straightforward non-political soldier (remarkably so, for a Pole)." [24] As well as agreeing to the nomination of Kopański as GOC PRC it was also agreed that:

"The general feeling of the Committee was that everything possible should be done to ensure that as few Poles as possible remained in this country." [25]

What this meant in reality was that the British would continue to encourage the emigration of the Poles; the Foreign Office would be "unremitting" in its efforts to find places abroad for them; the Ministry of Transport would give favourable consideration to any request to take the Poles abroad; the Foreign Office would consider the desirability of asking the US Government for help in shipping.

Kopański, as the new Inspector-General of the PRC, recommended the Poles to join the Resettlement Corps and that the exile Government did not construe membership of the PRC as membership of a foreign armed force. This, of course, was a moot point and an argument can be made for

another interpretation - and it was this very line Warsaw used to remove the citizenship of the most prominent Polish generals. A secret letter from Colonel Komar, head of Warsaw's O.II to Minister Olszewski at the Warsaw Foreign Ministry in July, 1946, highlighted this very military nature of the PRC insomuch as, although it was under UK command, it would be run by Poles on military lines, with military uniforms and ranks and in the same military structures - brigades and divisions - and by the same officers. [26] The London Polish Government's view of the PRC was different in that:

"The creation of the Polish Resettlement Corps enables the soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces to survive abroad while the change in Poland's fortunes does not allow them an honourable return to a free and independent Republic." [27]

One of the principal anxieties in the minds of Polish servicemen was a concern about the future of their families and dependants, scattered as they were in War Office camps across the globe. Many men adamantly refused to join the PRC unless it was made clear what was to become of them - a view to which the War Office was largely sympathetic. In July, 1947, Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzgeorge-Balfour wrote a paper for the Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Polish Forces Official Committee regarding Operation "Polejump" by which Polish dependants were to be brought to Britain:

"It is unreasonable and useless to expect most men to agree to move to the United Kingdom and join the Polish Resettlement Corps if he does not know what is to be the fate of his family and dependents. Failure to obtain a quick decision will therefore complicate and delay the move." [28]

Kuropieska estimates that in 1946 there were some 41,400 dependants of the Polish Armed Forces:

United Kingdom	:	8,000	
Italy	:	8,200	
East Africa	:	12,400	
South Africa	:	200	
New Zealand	:	400	
India	:	3,600	
Palestine	:	5,200	
Mexico	:	400	
Western Germany	:	3,000	
		=====	
		41,400	[29]

To a great extent these Poles were the lucky ones as by nature of their dependence to service personnel they could rely on the provisions of the Polish Resettlement Act to help them come to Britain and start new lives. For the hundreds of thousands of Polish DPs in Europe, the future was a bleak one. Despite the rigours of slave labour and concentration camps, the end of the war did not bring an end to their misery. Many felt that the threat of a sudden and brutal death at the hands of the Nazis had been replaced by a slow and lingering death at the hands of the Allies.

The exact number of DPs is difficult to determine and it is even more difficult to record the figures by nationality. Tannahill puts the figure for DPs under British control as:

<u>NATIONALITY</u>	:	<u>BRITISH ZONE</u>	:	<u>AUSTRIA</u>	:	<u>TOTAL</u>
		(on 17/11/1946)		(on 23/11/46)		
Estonian	:	13,309	:	120	:	13,429
Hungarian	:	3,808	:	7,446	:	11,254
Latvian	:	45,413	:	667	:	46,080
Lithuanian	:	23,882	:	268	:	24,150
Polish	:	151,664	:	7,167	:	158,831
Romanian	:	3,243	:	2,183	:	5,426
Ukrainian	:	Not available.	:	3,350	:	3,350
(Polish)	:	(In Poles/Others)	:		:	
Ukrainian	:	ditto	:	1,032	:	1,032
(Russian)	:		:		:	
Byelorussian:	:	ditto	:	1,257	:	1,257
Russian	:	260	:	4,527	:	4,787
Yugoslav	:	13,390	:	27,155	:	40,545
Others	:	3,324	:	7,256	:	10,580
Undetermined:	:	23,851	:	9,680	:	33,531
	:	=====	:	=====	:	=====
	:	282,144	:	72,108	:	354,252

[30]

In the British occupation zones of Germany and Austria there were around 160,000 Polish DPs, but this figure also included Jews, Ukrainians and Byelorussians who declared themselves Poles for a variety of reasons. Across Germany there were over 300,000 Poles. PUR established the figure for November, 1946:

DPs in Germany, November, 1946.

	US ZONE	:	BRITISH ZONE	:	FRENCH ZONE	:	TOTAL
POLES	: 111,602	:	180,007	:	25,868	:	317,477
All DPs:	220,695	:	204,426	:	26,247	:	451,368

[31]

These figures are confirmed by UNRRA who gave the figures for DPs seeking assistance in Germany and Austria, during September, 1946:

	<u>GERMANY</u>	<u>AUSTRIA</u>
Poles	315,110	15,621
Czechs	1,143	486
Soviet Citizens	9,600	519
Yugoslavs	14,216	7,103
Estonians	31,362	350
Latvians	93,170	1,169
Lithuanian	56,647	779

[32]

The end of 1946 also saw the end of the mass DP repatriations that typified the direct post-war years. Anyone who had not returned to Poland by that time would probably never return. The Head of the Consular Section, Polish Military Mission, Berlin, wrote to the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw in 1948 regarding the DP situation in Germany. Between the end of the war and the 1st August, 1948, there had been some 1,200,000 repatriations from Germany to Poland:

1945 -	409,881
1946 -	294,337
1947 -	75,304
Up to 1/8/1948 -	6,007

It was further estimated that around 400,000 Poles made their own way to Poland through unofficial channels. It was noted in the report that as late as 1948 there were 83,000 Poles still in DP camps in the British Zone and a further 4,000 outside the camps. In the US Zone there were still 49,759 Poles in camps and a further 77,868 Polish Jews and 24,000 Poles living outside camps. In the French Zone there were still 11,000 Poles.

All three administrations in Germany came in for

criticism from the Polish Mission for an apparently negative approach to repatriation. The British, it was alleged, did not take repatriation seriously and wanted to keep the best Poles for themselves with only a desire to be rid of troublemakers and convicts. In the spring of 1947, the British set up the Civilian Mixed Watchman Service and then the Civilian Mixed Labour Organisation to use Poles as an unofficial guard unit in Germany; the idea was so popular that by July, 1948, there were 11,550 men in these organisations. The Americans set up a similar organisation which employed around 11,000 Poles - much to the suspicion of Warsaw.

It was the French Government's attitude that was seen to be the most hostile by Warsaw's men although this hostility was always "masked in niceties and externally seeming quite correct". [33] This was something that the Polish Consul in Rastatt, Jerzy Krzeczowski, complained of when he wrote a secret report to Dr. Marecki, the Consul General in Berlin. He alleged that the French were hostile to the idea of the Poles returning to Poland and so actively encouraged recruitment by other countries to ensure they did not go to Poland. French and Belgian industry had been recruiting in the French Zone since autumn of 1945, Canada had been allowed access in mid-1946, the British at the end of 1946 and Brazil at the start of 1947. [34] A cynical interpretation of these events might suggest that the Poles did not want to

return to Poland and needed little encouragement from the tri-zonal authorities not to go. On the other hand the Warsaw Missions needed to blame someone - they could not blame the situation in Poland and so chose to blame the ill will of others. In reality, the complaints of Warsaw's people present an unlikely scenario. Not only did the occupation authorities not encourage DPs to stay in exile but they actively encouraged and on occasion used force to return DPs to their respective countries.

UNRRA was well aware of the general feelings of the DPs in its charge. The report at Appendix J demonstrates the feeling of Polish DPs and why they refused to return to Poland and yet the US military was unsympathetic in its dealing with these DPs - a problem that threatened the stability in Germany as time went on. An UNRRA report highlighted this deterioration:

"At this stage, the morale of the Displaced Persons is at its lowest ebb. The change of attitude and treatment by the U.S. Military leaves them utterly bewildered. The incomprehensible moves of entire populations from one camp to another, abruptly destroying whatever meager [sic] roots they may have established, fills them with dismay. The increase of German authority over them and the announced prospect of their being dumped into the German community and left to their own resources, is draining their very last hopes." [35]

SHAEF had stated that DPs would be cared for at the expense of the German population and that priority would be given to DP requirements over the Germans. In practice it did not work out that way. The same UNRRA report continued that:

"Army directives have always stated that priority in employment be given to DPs, yet consistent discrimination has been practised against this group by all Army echelons."

General Joseph T. McNarey, head of the Military Government in the US Zone, tried at first to rid himself of the Polish DPs by bribing them to leave. He offered two months extra food to any DP who volunteered for repatriation to Poland.

"I urge all Polish displaced persons in the US Zone of Germany to take advantage of this new plan for a 60 day food ration, available to all who return to Poland during the period October 1 to December 31, 1946. The U.S. Army and the American people firmly believe that your future lies in Poland, helping to rebuild your devastated country" [36]

This worked with some Poles - for most it did not. The Americans then tried another approach to encourage the Poles to go. The British Foreign Office had begun a policy with regards to the Polish Armed Forces that can be best described as the "lesser of two evils": conditions in Britain would be made so bad that the Poles would want to return to Poland. The US Military Government carried out much the same policy with the DPs in its charge but with a ferocity that the British could never have envisaged using against the citizens of an ally. The UNRRA report below deals with American attitudes to the DPs:

"They [DPs] are held in the greatest contempt by the Germans, who lose no opportunity to discredit them in the eyes of the American Military authorities. The effect of this derogatory influence has been strong and widespread to the point where it has

seeped up from the operating levels to even the highest military echelons. The DP problem has always been a nuisance to the Army. With redeployment and the introduction of new, untrained and unoriented military personnel, there is now an almost complete lack of knowledge and understanding of the factors which created the DP situation in the first place. [...] The DP are generally considered by military personnel as "lousy Poles" and "Goddam DP" who should be sent back where they came from whether they like it or not." [37]

Richard Lukas in his book "Bitter Legacy" lays the problem at the feet of UNRRA itself. Although UNRRA officials criticised the military, their own house needed putting in order. Lukas highlights two policies from UNRRA offices:

"Effective October 1st, 1946, all educational, recreational and other cultural activities are to be discontinued in all camps caring for one hundred or more Polish Displaced Persons"

"Do not employ Poles - repatriate them as they must go home...[there is] no such thing as an unrepatriable Pole.... Hire Outsiders, even Germans, to replace essential Poles, but fire Poles and get them home." [38]

It was becoming clear that Germans were getting preferential treatment to the DPs. The eagerness of US troops to confiscate DP property had much to do with this as UNRRA reported:

"Independent efforts by the DP to obtain supplementary clothing are again attacked as black-market activities; in fact, items of clothing legitimately possessed by the DP are often confiscated by U.S. troops or German Police during shakedown raids. The German civilian is still unusually well dressed and presents a neat respectable appearance. In contrast the DP looks like a bum, and this difference does not fail to make its impression on the U.S. troops. The German looks like a gentleman (or a lady) and the U.S. soldier accept him as such; the DP man or woman looks like a bum or a tramp and that is the way they are regarded." [39]

These events did not go unnoticed in Warsaw. PUR recognised that the DPs were particularly vulnerable. A report from September, 1946, alleged that armed US troops burst into a DP transport train at Freilassing in Bavaria to "confiscate US Army property" but ended up stealing cigarettes, chocolate and even the blankets given by UNRRA. [40] This evident disregard for the welfare of these poor unfortunates united Warsaw with the Polish community in America. The Polish paper "Życie Warszawy" in January, 1946, cited "Nowiny Polskie", a Polish language paper published in New York, in which an article under the title "Disgraceful attitude of UNRRA towards Poles" complained that UNRRA had a two tier system with the West Europeans refugees being in the upper tier while the Poles and other East European DPs being in the lower. "We are a second class nation" complained the article. [41]

This did not escape the notice of the War Office which compiled a file of protests from various PWX who were still being held by the US 7th Army in the former Oflag Murnau. One letter, written as early as July, 1945, complains:

"Now we are free, but it is a pretence only. To tell you the truth we have passed from German captivity to the American one. I have to confess that I am very disappointed with this apparent freedom. We are in the same barracks, the same dirt and bugs. We have repeatedly to endure the same humiliations as before. The Germans have much more liberty than we here."

Another complained in September, 1945:

"What can we do. We are betrayed by the allies, we are treated as before as prisoners of war, if we are to perish let's perish in our country." [42]

It seems little wonder that many Poles chose to return to Poland rather than rely on American aid but this was not just an American problem. Although not as well documented as the attitude of the US authorities, British policy towards DPs appears also to have been questionable as well - at least at ground level.

A report from the Political Division of the Control Commission for Germany in January, 1946, emphasised that this was a delicate matter and the military had to "...go carefully in the matter of putting pressure on DPs to go home." It further added that 43rd Division "...appear to have badly overstepped the mark". In DP camps in the divisional area the military had let it be known that a refusal to return would involve the removal of Red Cross parcels, uncertain rations and a deterioration of living condition. DPs would be "...on the lowest priority for what is available". Although the 51st Division was "...more reasoned" in its approach, it was still telling the DPs to go. If a DP agreed to be repatriated and then changed his mind, then the Division would not guarantee to feed or house that DP or to make provision to repatriate him later. This, according to the CCG, was not government policy. Pressure should not be put on DPs and they were at liberty to change their mind at any time

without sanctions being applied. [43]

Another case brought to light by the CCG was a leaflet hung up at Fallingbostel DP Camp which threatened that if the DPs did not return to Poland they would lose DP status and the Allies would wash their hands of them. The leaflet concluded:

"There is no room in the world today for idlers. You must face reality. You have only two alternatives. To remain here and work for the Germans or to return to Poland and work for your own salvation, and the salvation of your country. There is no third course. There is only one right decision. You must make it now." [44]

The leaflet was signed by "Major J.W. Murray, Military Government, 711 Det." and "H.E. Rendell, Director UNRRA Team." Whoever first read the leaflet at the Allied Liaison Branch scribbled "Good Heavens" in the margin and the comment "If this doesn't shift them nothing will!": such was the tone of the message.

The Prisoner of War and Displaced Persons Division of the CCG [PW+DP Div CCG(BE)] went to great pains to stress that the the document was unauthorised and would be suppressed. However the Political Division did ask the PW+DP Div. for a report on the effects of the document and "...whether it in any way hastened repatriation".

One of the reasons for a change in attitude towards DPs was a perceived growth of lawlessness. A Polish report from March, 1946, listed the number of Polish criminals in Germany in the previous quarter of a year:

Murder	-	8	
Arms Offences	-	209	
Robbery	-	14	
Theft	-	214	
Curfew Offences	-	6	
Burglary	-	7	
War Crimes	-	11	
Black Market	-	104	
Petty Offences	-	218	
Other	-	191	
		===	
		982	[45]

What aggravated the situation from a Polish perspective was that the justice system used in Germany appeared to be geared against the DP. The case of the "Paderborn 4" caused much official and unofficial protest from Poland at the time and put a spotlight on the way the Allies administered the law.

A band of Polish DPs had been caught by German security guards while in the act of theft and one of the Poles was killed. In the resulting riot that ensued, as Poles from the local DP camp visited the nearest German village intent on vengeance, several Germans were killed. Whereas the German security guard was exonerated as he was found to have killed the original Pole in self-defence the rioting Poles, on the other hand, were given long prison sentences - 35 were sent to prison for periods of from 3 to 20 years - and four were sentenced to death. The Warsaw Foreign Ministry greeted the news with outrage and warned it might affect Polish-British relations. The British argued that it was necessary to impose harsh penalties in Germany to maintain law and

order; the Poles argued that they were a special case and to them it looked - with some justice - that the German were being better treated than the Poles. As it turned out, the death sentences were commuted by the C-in-C Germany, Field Marshal Montgomery on "solely legal grounds". [46]

The case of Chaim Katz also raised questions in London. Katz, a Polish Jew, had been found guilty of the unlawful possession of a revolver and sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. On hearing of this harsh punishment Sir Arthur Street (Permanent Secretary to the Control Office for Germany and Austria, London) wrote to the Deputy Military Governor of Germany, General Sir Brian Robertson, that he was "disturbed" by the judgement, especially since Katz was only 20 years old; he was "a member of a persecuted class" and had spent five years in Buchenwald concentration camp. Sir Arthur assumed the court had passed such a severe sentence expecting it to be reduced later but this went against natural justice.

"The court, no doubt, had in mind the increase of crime among DPs when imposing what, by our standards here, was an immense sentence. I feel too that they acted on a wrong principle in passing a sentence which they expected to be reduced on review: and that, within reason, sentences be based on the principle of making the punishment fit the crime." [47]

The options that were open to the Polish DPs were limited. They could either return to Poland - an option not welcomed by many Poles despite the privations inflicted on them by others - or they could remain in

Germany awaiting an altogether uncertain future. By 1947 there was a new lifeline being thrown to the DPs in the shape of the European Volunteer Worker scheme [EVW]. In the case of the Poles the EVW scheme led to a certain amount of confusion as to British policy, especially since the DPs had heard of Bevin's note suggesting to the Polish Armed Forces, in the strongest possible terms, that they should leave Britain, yet only months later other Poles were being encouraged to come to Britain to work. This hardly seemed a consistent policy.

From the British point of view, the Poles were not the first choice as EVWs. The two main operations for bringing these workers to Britain were operations "Westward Ho" and "Balt Cygnet", the latter being for Women primarily from the Baltic states. The total EVW figures, according to the Ministry of Labour, were:

Ukrainian	20,930	
Polish	14,018	
Latvian	11,832	
Yugoslav	10,192	
Lithuanian	5,732	
Estonian	4,114	
Hungarian	2,474	
Czech	1,336	
Sudetans	1,319	
Romanians	800	
Bulgars	91	
Stateless	1,137	
Others	536	
	=====	
	74,511	[48]

What is interesting about these figures is the high proportion of Ukrainians and Balts, especially

considering the overall proportions of the DP population in Europe. The reason is explained in David Cesarani's book "Justice Delayed - How Britain became a refuge for Nazi war criminals", a study filled with moral indignation at a secret British Government cover-up to bring former SS men to work in Britain.

At the head of the list of potential workers who could be allowed into Britain, men of the Baltic states were deemed to be the most desirable. According to a letter from the British Consulate in Baden-Baden to the FO Refugee Department, Balts should be given preference over Poles as they were "...a much better type than the Poles, more intelligent, honest and reliable, with a higher standard of education." [49]The plan was guided by the principles of eugenics, if Britain was to have foreign settlers then they should be of 'good stock'; they should be white - thus excluding most of the Empire; Jews were to be excluded at all cost. Of the European DPs, the Poles were not to be encouraged to join the scheme. Although, technically, the EVW scheme was open to all and no discrimination would be applied, the FO announced: "There is no objection to your making clear that Polish men except miners will not be invited to volunteer for the present." Waterfield of the FO pointed out that this was discrimination by anyone's definition. Although discrimination against the Poles would continue, the Foreign Office would not allow "open discrimination"

and to emphasise this point Hankey minuted: "Let discrimination against Poles be hidden so far as possible, please. It will make much trouble for us." [50]

Because potential workers from the Baltic States were considered to be better workers they were given preferential treatment, even to the extent that men of the 15th and 19th Waffen SS (Latvian) Divisions and the 20th Waffen SS (Estonian) Division were offered a life in Britain. If the British could let in individual SS men, then it became possible to rehabilitate an entire SS Division. It was in this way that virtually the whole of the 14th Waffen SS (Ukrainian) Division was transferred to Britain - war criminals included. The Foreign Office was "...not holding membership of the Waffen SS (which was compulsory for non-German volunteers) a crime against them" [51] and despite warnings from the War Office that its screening process was hopelessly inadequate, Boothby of the FO was still prepared to tell the Ministry of Labour: "I think that there is little, if any, possibility of any person with an undesirable wartime record being brought to this country". [52] Despite being so convinced that these SS men had clean records, it was thought best to keep the whole issue quite as the British public might not understand the policy.

The case of the SS blood group tattoos that erupted in October of 1947, was an occasion when the FO did its best to keep its actions quiet. As the potential EVWs

were arriving in Britain they had to undergo medical examinations. One group in London were examined by a Polish doctor who recognised the distinctive tattoos of the SS and was justifiably horrified by what he saw. The story leaked out to the press and public outrage ensued. The Foreign Office was more concerned with the actions of the Polish doctor - Boothby accused him of acting "irresponsibly" and Brimelow of the FO noted that the doctor should "confine attentions to the sick and NOT meddle with blood groups". [53]

Charles Zarine of the Latvian Legation wrote to the Foreign Office to try to clear up the confused situation. It was certainly true that troops of the SS had their blood groups tattooed on their bodies but, Zarine argued, tattoos did not necessarily mean membership of the SS since it was German policy to tattoo **all** the troops under their command. They had started with the SS, they had tattooed the foreign volunteers and had not had time to tattoo the rest of the German Armed Forces. Despite being a blatant untruth, Zarine's explanation was seized upon by the Foreign Office as a cover story to use if the news of these former SS men threatened their moves to place these men on the labour market - particularly in the mining industry. It was feared that British miners might well see these tell-tale tattoos in the shirts-off environment in which they worked and given the fact that

they did not want any foreign workers in the mines they would certainly not take kindly to SS men. The FO ruled that any EVW with the relevant tattoo would not be employed in mines but this too would be kept quiet so that only the Coal Board medics would know. The man concerned and the Baltic Legation would be told that the man had been rejected on "suitability grounds". [54]

Despite Britain's desire to import Balts, it was soon realised that there were not enough of these people to meet Britain's labour shortage. The EVW scheme was thus expanded to take in Poles but this led to a contradiction and a circle that was difficult to square.

Britain, with the hundreds of thousands of Poles in its charge, had to encourage repatriation to Poland or convince other countries to take them while at the same time ensuring that they picked the best workers for their own economy. Britain could not allow "...foreign countries to skim the cream of possible settlers". [55]

Given Polish perceptions of hostility to their presence, there was little enthusiasm towards the prospect of life in Britain. As 1946 drew to a close the FO complained that only 342 Poles had been placed in civilian employment. It was, as Hancock minuted, "Pretty rotten!". Hankey was even more open with his criticism:

"This is going very badly. It is really ridiculous that we can't even get agreement to take on Poles to deal with Xmas parcels traffic! I am plotting with W.O. an onslaught on M[inistr]y/Labour who are fumbling their local machinery." [56]

This, combined with Polish pessimism, did not bode well for the future. The Poles had a fear that they would be used to do Britain's dirty work abroad, just as Napoleon had used his Polish Legions a century before. In 1802 Napoleon dispatched some 6,000 Poles to Santo Domingo [Haiti] to clear up a rebellion there and only 300 ever returned. Therefore, news that the British might want to use the Poles in Asia was met with horror. As Frank Savery told the Commons in March, 1947:

"The rumours are that those people who go into the [Resettlement] Corps will be sent out to Burma where they will be used to clear out swamps, and there is..."

Mr Callaghan (Cardiff South) "Jolly good idea."

"That is the rumour that has been spread." [57]

It is little wonder that when other countries offered the Poles work they took it. The Dutch put in a request to the British for 5,300 Polish miners but the move was vetoed by the Ministry of Labour which argued that Britain needed miners, a view that did not please the Dutch nor, for that matter, the Foreign Office. The FO view was that it was better to get rid of 5,300 Poles out of the country than "keep them hanging about on the off chance of the Trades Unions agreeing to them working here." [58]

The Poles, for their part, were quite keen to

settle in the Netherlands. 1,200 men of General Maczek's Armoured Division which had liberated part of southern Holland were given the right of residence there and their dependants added another 800 to that number. [59]

Although France had been trawling the DP centres for workers, they did not want to take any Polish servicemen other than those resident there before the war. This, in fact, amounted to some 3,500 Poles who, in March of 1946, were leaving at a rate of 200 men twice a week. [60]

A report by the Under-secretary of State, Hector McNeil, in April 1946, outlined the potential for dispersing Poles to third countries. The Dutch wanted miners but France did not look promising, and neither did Belgium - a country already holding 10,000 Polish refugees and unwilling to accept any more. Scandinavia had yet to come to a firm decision at that time and the Italian Government had said it would take Poles with "local obligations", that is Poles who were married to Italian women, but would not go much further. If the 'Old World' offered little scope for emigration the prospects in the 'New World' seemed brighter and more open. The US Government, it was believed, might be induced to allow retrospective emigration within the unused quota for the previous five years. Since few Poles had moved to the USA during the war, it was hoped that the Poles in Britain would be allowed to go to the States to make up the figures. This would inevitably mean that no Poles from

Poland would be allowed into the USA for the next five years to keep the immigration numbers level - it was doubted, however, that the Warsaw regime would allow mass emigration anyway so this did not present too much of a problem.

South America seemed to be even more fertile ground. There was the prospect that Chile might take some 20,000 European families and the Dominican Republic was in need of some 10 to 15,000 agricultural workers; Brazil wanted immigrants but had yet to come to a firm decision; Columbia, Mexico and Uruguay had given unfavourable responses to British requests for mass settlement; Bolivia had not given a concrete answer and while Guatemala had shown some interest they had not been definite in their answer. [61]

Argentina, a traditional exile for Poles, had given a very positive reaction to the idea of accepting Polish troops. Although the Argentine Government agreed to agricultural and skilled workers, they certainly did not want intellectuals, neither did they want Jews. The reason for this was not racial, according to the Foreign Office, but rather that experience had shown in Argentina that Jews did not make good agricultural workers and tended to drift into commerce in towns - this was just the opposite of what the Argentine economy needed. The Argentine Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the Polish troops would

"...contribute to the raising of the efficiency of the Argentine Armed Forces". [62] On the 13th April, 1946, the "Highland Monarch" sailed for Argentina and Uruguay with 191 Poles on Board.

	<u>Argentina</u>	<u>Uruguay</u>
Polish Army	: 67	53
Polish Navy	: 19	1
Polish Air Force	: 46	5

Few of these men were front line troops, most being service and medical personnel.

Just as the British had wanted to keep specialists for themselves, so the Polish Government in Warsaw was anxious for the return of its highly trained men and women. An advert by the Labour Section of the Welfare Department - Interim Treasury Committee for Polish Questions, published in the "Polish Daily" led to a protest from the Polish Embassy in London:

"Departure for Brazil: Chemical expert wanted for metallurgical analyses, electricians, welders, locksmiths, fitters, carpenters, blacksmiths, moulders.

Civil Engineer or technical experts in designing of mechanical parts.

Agricultural labourers and jobbing gardeners for casual work; also all kinds of domestic servants." [63]

Warsaw's protest was that the British should be putting more effort into encouraging Polish soldiers to return home rather than going to Brazil. Hankey, in his response to the Embassy, agreed, in principle, to the Polish protest but the fact still remained that these same Polish specialists did not want to return to Poland and

as such:

"We can in existing circumstances neglect no opportunity of finding suitable employment and places of settlement whether in this country or abroad for those who remain here...."

Again this added fuel to the flames of Warsaw's conspiracy theory that Britain was doing its best to ensure Poles did not return to Poland. Warsaw's Chargé d'Affaires in Cairo, Janusz Makarczyk, complained to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs about General Paget [GOC MEF] who was "...the main obstacle to the return of Poles to Poland and has thrown his entire authority behind keeping the 2nd Corps in existence." According to Makarczyk, Paget's plan was to put his charges into the Sudan or some other independent country "...so that the British Government would no longer be formally responsible for the existence of a Polish colony run on paramilitary lines." [64] Although Warsaw's concern was deeply felt, the Polish Armed Forces were not all made up of peasants from beyond the River Bug. There were nearly 10,000 highly qualified workers in the PRC:

165	University Professors/Lecturers	
319	Secondary School Teachers	
690	Primary School Teachers	
131	Journalists	
54	Professional Writers	
617	Lawyers	
400	Actors/Musicians/Artists	
850	Members of the Judiciary	
64	Architects	
71	Members of the Clergy	
Over 1,000	Qualified Engineers (All branches)	
790	Doctors/Dentists	
302	Qualified Chemists	
2,500	Civil Servants (All grades)	
1,800	Private Sector clerks/officials	[65]

The loss of this core of pre-war intelligentsia, combined with the Nazi extermination of the same social strata in Poland, was something the country could ill afford. For the British, this wealth proved more of a nightmare than a Godsend. Although many Poles spoke English to a certain degree few spoke it well enough to carry on with their Polish profession in the UK. Also many of these Poles were of an advanced age and Zbyszewski states that the average Polish trooper was older than a British Captain or a Major in the US Army. There were, he goes on, men in the Polish Armed Forces who were too old to be in the British Home Guard. [66] The age factor was particularly acute in the Officer Corps. The FO statisticians calculated that there were over 2,500 Polish officers over 50 years old.

	Years:	58+	56/57	54/55	52/53	50/51	
General	:	51					
Colonels	:		105				
Lt-Colonels	:			181			
Majors	:				420		
Captains	:					900	
Lieutenants	:					575	
2nd Lieutenants:						235	
		--	---	---	---	-----	
[67]		51	105	181	420	1,800	= 2,557

Although these older officers would be difficult to place in employment, it would be even more difficult to find work for the criminal element that was found in every army. In July 1946, AFHQ Caserta wrote to the War

Office seeking advice about what to do with these undesirables which it separated into three groups:

1/ 1,200 Soldiers with multiple service entries on conduct sheets.

2/ 727 Dependents:

Collaboration with Germans Proved	: 23
War Criminals ie Gestapo, SS, Volksdeutsche	: 56
Strongly suspected of collaboration	: 10
Notorious criminals	: 164
Inveterate alcoholics or "dope fiends"	: 63
Notorious prostitutes	: 133
Suspected prostitutes	: 29
Persons hostile to Poles ie of Russian extraction, Ukrainians etc.	: 114
Mental Cases	: 7
Deserters from Cervinara Repatriation Camp	: 128

3/ 2,300 Poles who had "disconnected themselves" from Polcorps and settled in Italy [68]

The Foreign Office, which advised the War Office on matters of policy, said that the third category in the AFHQ list could be treated as DPs in Italy but the first and second group - inveterate alcoholics, dope fiends and notorious prostitutes among them - would have to come to the UK for resettlement.

As time went on and more and more Poles began arriving in Britain, so the realisation began to dawn on the British that they were now stuck with these undesirables. The following summary of a report on one of the last dependent transports from Africa would have made depressing reading for the National Assistance Board [NAB] who would soon have to support the Poles:

"The Commission is at Tengeru Camp in Tanganyika and are in the process of examining 1,000 Poles. The following is an analysis of the first 250:-

230 (92%) Accepted for residence in UK, or for transit purposes prior to further emigration.

5 (2%) Rejected on Medical Grounds

6 (2%) Rejected on Immigration Grounds

6 (2%) To be queried on Immigration Grounds

3 (1½%) Local Resettlement in East Africa.

Analysis by Age:

0-5	Years	-	Male:16 (14%)	Female:10 (8½%)
5-15	Years	-	Male:11 (9½%)	Female:10 (8½%)
15-40	Years	-	Male:37 (32%)	Female:43 (37%)
40-60	Years	-	Male:39 (34%)	Female:44 (38%)
60+	Years	-	Male:11 (9½%)	Female: 9 (8%)

General Notes:

- 1/ The foregoing figures are possibly a fair picture of the position in the camp.
- 2/ Camp living conditions are bad. The site is a partly controlled malaria swamp. "If the Poles survive here they will flourish in a NAB Hostel."
- 3/ Morale is low. The people contribute little and are eager to sit back and accept.
- 4/ The Malaria rate is fairly high.
- 5/ The VD rate is said to be high.
- 6/ The Canadian Commission took the best of the inhabitants when they visited the camp in 1948 and the Australian Commission took the best of the remainder when they visited in 1949. The British Commission is now quite clearly scraping the bottom of the barrel.
- 7/ "There is a good leavening among the residents of crooks, criminals, 'smart boys', etc."
- 8/ "There is very little real infirmity or disablement, that the special NAB hostels will hardly be needed."
- 9/ Few of the younger people and hardly anybody over the age of 40 speak English adequately.
- 10/ There is no marked enthusiasm to come to England. Many want to go to the USA and Canada and there is a great desire for the Argentine.

Dr. Boucher May 31st, 1950." [69]

It has to be said that if the British were reluctant to accept certain Poles then the feeling was mutual among certain Poles who wanted nothing to do with the British. The so-called "recalcitrants" who refused to join the Polish Resettlement Corps were another group who provided the Foreign Office with yet another problem to sort out. If a Pole refused to return to Poland and at the same time refused to join the PRC - many were in just that position - what could the British do with them? In August, 1946, the Cabinet Polish Forces Committee discussed how best to dispose of recalcitrant Poles. Two options that were mooted were either to send the troublesome Poles to Tripolitania [Libya] or to Germany. The former option was not one favoured by the Committee; the future of the area was still not clear so to move the Poles to North Africa would, at best, be a temporary move and the logistics of supplying the Poles would be difficult, not least since new camps would have to be built to accommodate the Poles. The option of Germany was favoured by the Committee although the FO's German Department was not at all keen. According to the German Department the British Occupation Zone was overcrowded - the most crowded of all the zones - and there was not enough food or accommodation to supply the Poles. [70] The War Office also saw Germany as the most likely option and they issued an order on the 2nd February, 1947:

"Officers and men who have not signed on as members of the Resettlement Corps will be given 7 days in which to do so. If after this period they have not signed, they will be taken to a camp near Hull, then by ship to Cuxhaven near Osnabruck there demobilised, given 400 Marks, a civilian outfit and left to fend for themselves." [71]

The War Office and Foreign Office went through with their threat to deport various recalcitrants, more as an experiment to see how the deportation of a token few would affect the remainder. On the 14th February, 1947, there were 12,796 recalcitrants refusing to join the PRC. The War Office threatened 189 Poles with deportation to Germany. Of these 189 Poles: 39 decided to join the PRC; 86 decided to return to Poland; 64 chose to go to Germany. The WO extrapolated that if 66% of this batch ended up in Germany, some 4,700 of the total number would end up in the British zone. Fortunately for everyone concerned, this example seemed to help many Poles to make up their minds and either join the PRC or return to Poland. Therefore in March there were 10,720 recalcitrants - a drop of 2,000 in a month. [72]

At the Foreign Office the 'Polish Question' must have indeed seemed hydra-headed; just as one problem was resolved so a new one would arise to vex them.

One of the problems involved in allowing the Poles to live in Britain was how to stop them waging a propaganda war against the Warsaw Government. These "White Poles" as they became known at Foreign Office - a clear reference to the pejorative term used in Russia

after the revolution - seemed to be "spiteful, malicious and improper" towards the Communists. In London, Marjan Hemar's newest play at the "White Eagle Club" in May 1947, drew particular criticism from Warsaw and its apologists in Britain. Hankey, on the otherhand, was having none of it; as he minuted:

"I don't see what we can do. And nothing Hemar says is likely to be worse than what Gomułka says about us. Only on May Day he let fly at us again. Charity begins at home." [73]

There was also the Polish Government-in-Exile to contend with. Although most countries had ceased to recognise the Government in 1945, to the Polish Armed Forces in the West it was widely considered as the only legitimate Polish Government regardless of what London, Washington or anyone else thought about it. One issue that again drew protest from Warsaw was how to stop Władysław Raczkiewicz from calling himself "President" which, to the Poles in Britain, he still was. According to Hankey, there was very little that could be done. It was not a criminal offence to call oneself "President" or, for that matter, to organise a "government". One option that Hankey offered was to send Raczkiewicz and his group to the Irish Free State which still recognised the exiles, but since Bevin had no intention of asking the Irish for anything, that option also seemed closed. The only way out that Hankey could see was the simplest - ask him to stop. As it turned out, only days after Hankey wrote these minutes Raczkiewicz died, thus solving that

particular problem. [74] However, even in death Raczkiewicz proved troublesome. At his funeral the British Government was represented and the Poles provided an armed honour guard. The Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs undertook the rather churlish step of protesting to the new British ambassador, Sir Donald Gainer, that since Raczkiewicz was a "private individual" the British should not have attended. Warsaw also questioned the fact that if the Resettlement Corps were supposed to be a non-combatant unit, then how did it provide armed guards? Again Hankey was having none of Warsaw's impudence and he told Gainer to inform Warsaw that the funeral of Raczkiewicz was totally in line with the courtesy provided to an Allied wartime leader. [75]

As if it wasn't enough for the Poles in Warsaw stirring up the waters, the Poles in the UK were doing much the same. The Poles requested the War Office to be allowed to fly Polish flags at PRC camps. Although today it appears a reasonable enough request, the Foreign Office looked at it with horror. As Roper of the FO wrote to Major Roberts at the WO:

"Frankly we do not like this. The flying of Polish flags would involve, no doubt, the usual ceremonies, and the whole thing will draw public attention to the foreignness of the men in the Polish Resettlement Corps, which is just what we are trying to get away from. They are a part of the British Army which is going to be absorbed into civilian life alongside British citizens.

If you agree, perhaps the British Advisory Staff could intimate to General Kopanski that they do not want to hear anymore of this proposal for the reason I have given." [76]

The terms of the Polish Resettlement Act provided that a Polish soldier or sailor could join the Polish Resettlement Corps for a period of two years - the Polish Air Force had their own PRC wing. Once a man was in the Corps he would carry out vocational training and take English classes whilst at the same time look for civilian employment. When he found work he would be put on the "Class W(T) Reserve" list and continue to work out the remaining days towards the two year mark when he would be a fully fledged civilian. If, for some reason, he left his job he would rejoin the 'active' list of the PRC until he found another one. The whole process was to act as a cushion for the Poles between the order of military life and the freedom of being a civilian, albeit in a new and very foreign country.

Despite many problems and the many hours given over to Polish affairs, the Poles settled in Britain and formed a successful part of the community in the UK. During the debate on the winding down of the PRC in 1949, the British Government expressed its satisfaction at what it had done for the Poles. The Under-secretary of State for War, Michael Stewart, told the Commons:

"My hon. friends will remember the propaganda which was rife in certain sections of the Press in 1920 on the subject of abuses of the Unemployment Insurance Act and how it was common form in certain quarters, by picking out particular abuses, to suggest that the entire British working class was endeavouring to live in idleness on public funds. I am sorry to say that some of the Press comments that have been made in some quarters on the Polish Resettlement Corps

bear an ugly resemblance to the propaganda of that period. I believe that if we look at the story as a whole, we shall see that those attacks are not justified, and that although there must inevitably have been some mistakes, we have carried out our handling of this problem with due regard to our obligation both to the Poles and the people of this country." [77]

The total number of Poles who were demobilised from the Polish Armed Forces were:

<u>Polish Resettlement Corps</u>	:	114,000
<u>Returned to Poland</u> from United Kingdom	:	86,000
from Italy	:	12,000
from Germany	:	5,000
from Middle East	:	2,000
<u>Disbanded without joining PRC</u>	:	8,000
<u>"Recalcitrants" ineligible for PRC</u>	:	1,000
<u>Repatriated to countries other than Poland</u>	:	14,000
<u>Settled in France</u>	:	7,000
		=====
		249,000 [78]

From the nearly quarter of a million Polish Armed Forces, 105,000 returned to Poland. The above figures do not give a clear indication of how many Poles began new lives in Britain. According to Zubrzycki, the peak of Polish settlement in Britain was in December, 1949:

<u>Polish Resettlement Corps</u>	:	91,400
<u>Ex-Polish Forces not in PRC</u>	:	2,300
<u>Dependants of the above brought to UK by War Office</u>	:	31,800
<u>'Distressed Relatives' brought to UK (Poles married to UK Citizens)</u>	:	2,400
<u>Polish 'European Volunteer Workers'</u>	:	29,400
		=====
		157,300 [79]

In 1949, according to the Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police, Poles made up well over a quarter of the aliens in the Police District: 37,819 or 27.2% of the total. [80]

After many years and many thousands of miles of wandering "General Sikorski's tourists" had finally found their home - even though it was not the one that they had wanted in the first place.

CONCLUSION

At the end of November, 1946, the No.5 (Polish) Field Hospital left Italy for the last time and was moved to Britain where it reopened at Barns Farm Camp, Storrington, West Sussex. In June, 1948, it was renamed the "PRC General Hospital - Storrington" and remained open until the complete demobilisation of the Polish Army.

Franciszek Ostrowski officially left the Polish Army on the 1st April, 1947, to join up with the Polish Resettlement Corps. He continued working at the hospital until he began civilian work on the 10th September, 1948, with the Redland Brick Company near Horsham in West Sussex. Following the terms of the Resettlement Act he was placed on the "Class W(T) Reserve" for the remainder of his two year contract with the PRC before being discharged on the 1st of April, 1949. It had indeed been a long war. He, like every Polish soldier, sailor and airman had made his decision about the future.

To return or not to return depended on three basic considerations about Poland after the war. The first consideration to be made was a moral one. To return to a Poland under the Communists was viewed by many Poles as a tacit vote of confidence for the new regime. This was an unfair judgement on the intentions of most but it was a view that indeed influenced many. Peer pressure and the prejudice of superior officers led to an association of

return to Poland with treason and betrayal of the cause of an independent Poland.

The second consideration that was made was of a more practical nature - how to survive in post-war Poland. The most obvious manifestation of this fear was the security situation. The rank and file of the Polish Armed Forces had been subjected to many years of propaganda regarding the Soviet Union from their officers, many of them had had first-hand dealings with the Red Army from 1939 onwards, so they were under no illusions as to what it meant to be a 'class enemy' to Communism. Fear was a key element in deciding whether to return or not. Even if some Poles did not fear the new regime, they knew that life in Poland would not be easy. The devastation of the war had left the country a ruin. What the Germans had not destroyed during their occupation had been demolished by the sweep of the Red Army 'liberating' Poland. The chronic housing shortage in Poland and the poor living and working conditions had their impact on willingness to return and yet for some even this was more preferable than living the life of an exile in Britain with its post-war austerity and, seemingly endless, rain.

The third consideration that should not be overlooked was a geographical one. Despite the calls of many British Labour Party supporters for the Poles to return "home", many did not have homes to return to. Vast tracts of Polish land had been lost to the Soviet Union and the

Poles who had once lived in the eastern part of Poland knew that if they returned to their homes east of the Curzon Line they would become citizens of the Soviet Union - a prospect that very few relished. The other option was to start a new life in the land that had been 'recovered' from Germany. Upper Silesia and East Prussia were now part of Poland and the question arose of just where did the Poles prefer to start a new life - in Britain with its possibility of later moves to Canada or the USA, or in a Poland dominated by the Red Army and slipping into a dictatorship backed by the guns of the secret police.

The fact that so many Poles did not return to Poland is not, given the situation at the time, so much of a surprise. What is more striking is the large number who **did** return. Over 42% of the Poles, some 105,000 in total, returned to Poland. A small minority were prepared to return to their homes in eastern Poland and live as Soviet citizens - their ultimate fate has yet to be adequately recorded. Some who had homes and families to return to went back to Poland to help, as Bevin put it, in the "arduous task of reconstructing the country and making good the devastation caused by the war". Many who were prepared to heed Bevin's words and risk the vengeance of the Communists went to Poland to help populate the newly acquired land in the west of Poland.

The dilemma that divided the Polish Armed Forces is not an easy one to define. Although the criteria can be

broadly categorized into groups, there were as many reasons to return or not as there were soldiers. After half a century it is as difficult as it is pointless to argue over who made the right decision. The exiles quickly settled into British life. According to John Keegan they became the "most successful immigrant community ever absorbed into British life" and, he continues, the fires of exile have "sunk into embers" [1] yet the Poles were foreigners - to many they were "bloody foreigners" - in a country that remained largely alien to them. Bitterness and cynicism have stood the test of time.

In Poland the Poles who had fought in the West had to suffer at the hands of a regime that had no popular legitimacy and abused its power to persecute its own citizens. Nevertheless they could grow old in the knowledge that they were in their own country and among their own people. The reconstruction of Poland after the devastation of war is an achievement of which Poles in Poland can be justly proud - a pride now shared by the men who fought at Cassino, in the Battle of Britain and the Battle of the Atlantic.

- : - : -

APPENDIX A

POLISH ARMED FORCES-1946

1st POLISH CORPS

1st Armoured Division :

10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade

1st Armoured Regiment.
2nd Armoured Regiment.
24th 'Hetman Żółkiewski' Lancer Regt.
10th Dragoons Regiment.

3rd Rifle Brigade

'Podhalański' Highland Light Infantry Battn.
8th 'Brabancki' Light Infantry Battalion.
9th 'Flandryjski' Light Infantry Battalion.
1st Independent Heavy Machine Gun Squadron.

10th Mounted Rifle Reconnaissance Regiment.
1st Motorised Field Artillery Regiment.
2nd Motorised Field Artillery Regiment.
1st Anti-Tank Regiment.
1st Anti-Aircraft Regiment.
1st Signals Battalion.

4th INFANTRY DIVISION (80% Strength):

1st Grenadier Brigade

1st Grenadier Battalion.
2nd Grenadier Battalion.
3rd Grenadier Battalion.

2nd Rifle Brigade

4th 'Warszawski' Rifle Battalion.
5th 'Małopolski' Rifle Battalion.
6th 'Kresowy' Rifle Battalion.

8th Rifle Brigade

24th 'Śląski' Infantry Battalion.
25th 'Pomorski' Infantry Battalion.
26th 'Pomorski' Infantry Battalion.

4th Independent Heavy Machine Gun Battalion
9th 'Małopolski' Lancer Reconnaissance Regiment
3rd Motorised Artillery Regiment
13th Field Artillery Regiment

14th Field Artillery Regiment
15th Field Artillery Regiment
4th Anti-Tank Regiment
4th Anti-Aircraft Regiment
4th Sapper Battalion
4th Signals Battalion

16th Independent Armoured Brigade :

14th 'Jazłowiecki' Lancer Regiment
3rd Armoured Regiment
5th Armoured Regiment
16th Dragoons Regiment
16th Signals Squadron
16th Supply Company
16th Engineering Company

1st Independent Parachute Brigade :

1st Parachute Battalion
2nd Parachute Battalion
3rd Parachute Battalion

2ND POLISH CORPS

Head Quarters 2nd Corps

12th 'Podolski' Lancer Regiment
7th Armoured Regiment
7th Anti-Tank Regiment
7th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment
8th Medium Anti-Aircraft Regiment
1st Artillery Survey Regiment
9th Heavy Artillery Regiment
10th Heavy Artillery Regiment
11th Heavy Artillery Regiment
12th Heavy Artillery Regiment
13th Heavy Artillery Regiment
10th Sapper Battalion
20th Sapper Battalion
11th Railway Engineering Battalion
11th Signals Battalion

3rd Carpathian Rifle Division :

1st Carpathian Rifle Brigade

1st Carpathian Rifle Battalion
2nd Carpathian Rifle Battalion
3rd Carpathian Rifle Battalion

2nd Carpathian Rifle Brigade

4th Carpathian Rifle Battalion
5th Carpathian Rifle Battalion
6th Carpathian Rifle Battalion

3rd Carpathian Rifle Brigade

7th Carpathian Rifle Battalion
8th Carpathian Rifle Battalion
9th 'Boloński' Rifle Battalion

3rd Carpathian Heavy Machine Gun Battalion
7th 'Lubelski' Lancer Reconnaissance Regiment
1st Carpathian Field Artillery Regiment
2nd Carpathian Field Artillery Regiment
3rd Carpathian Field Artillery Regiment
3rd Carpathian Anti-Tank Regiment
3rd Carpathian Field Anti-Aircraft Regiment
3rd Carpathian Signals Battalion

5th 'Kresowa' Infantry Division :

4th 'Wołyńska' Infantry Brigade

10th 'Wołyński' Rifle Battalion
11th 'Wołyński' Rifle Battalion
12th 'Wołyński' Rifle Battalion

5th 'Wileńska' Infantry Brigade

13th 'Wileński' Rifle Battalion 'Rysiów'
14th 'Wileński' Rifle Battalion 'Zbików'
15th 'Wileński' Rifle Battalion 'Wilków'

6th 'Lwowska' Infantry Brigade

16th 'Lwowski' Rifle Battalion
17th 'San Angelo' Rifle Battalion
18th 'Lwowski' Rifle Battalion

5th 'Kresowy' Heavy Machine Gun Battalion
25th 'Wielkopolski' Lancer Reconnaissance Regiment
4th 'Kresowy' Field Artillery Regiment
5th 'Wileński' Field Artillery Regiment
6th 'Lwowski' Field Artillery Regiment
5th 'Kresowy' Anti-Tank Regiment
5th 'Kresowy' Field Anti-Aircraft Regiment
5th 'Kresowy' Signals Battalion

2nd 'Warszawska' Armoured Division :

2nd Armoured Brigade

4th 'Skorpion' Armoured Regiment
1st 'Krechowiecki' Lancer Regiment
6th 'Dzieci Lwowa' Armoured Regiment

2nd Motorised Commando Battalion

16th 'Pomorska' Infantry Brigade (Reserve)

64th 'Pomorski' Infantry Battalion
65th 'Pomorski' Infantry Battalion
66th 'Pomorski' Infantry Battalion
16th 'Pomorski' Support Company

7th Horse Artillery Regiment
16th 'Pomorski' Field Artillery Regiment (Reserve)
2nd Anti-Tank Regiment
2nd Field Anti-Aircraft Regiment
Carpathian Lancer Reconnaissance Regiment
9th Forward Tank Replacement Squadron
2nd 'Warszawski' Signals Battalion

14th 'Wielkopolska' Armoured Brigade :

3rd 'Śląski' Lancer Regiment
15th 'Poznański' Lancer Regiment
10th 'Wołyński' Hussars Regiment

14th Forward Tank Replacement Squadron
14th 'Wielkopolska' Sapper Company
14th 'Wielkopolski' Signal Squadron

7th Infantry Division (80% Strength):

17th Infantry Brigade

21st Infantry Battalion
22nd Infantry Battalion
23rd Infantry Battalion

17th Machine Gun Company	17th Artillery Regiment
17th Sapper Company	17th Signals Company

All Formations Included:

Provost Corps	Service Corps
Medical Corps	Ordnance Corps
Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	
Geographic Corps	Legal Corps
Pay Corps and other service units.	

POLISH AIR FORCE

- 300 (Polish) Bomber Squadron "Ziemi Mazowieckiej"
- 301 (Polish) Bomber Squadron "Ziemi Pomorskiej -
Obronców Warszawy" (Stood down in 1943 to
become 1586 'Special Duties Flight' Central
Med.)
- 302 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Poznański"
- 303 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Warszawski - Kościuszko"
- 304 (Polish) Bomber Squadron "Ziemi Śląskiej -
Poniatowski"
- 305 (Polish) Bomber Squadron "Ziemi Wielkopolskiej -
Piłsudski"
- 306 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Toruński"
- 307 (Polish) Nightfighter Squadron "Lwowski"
- 308 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Krakowski"
- 309 (Polish) Fighter/reconnaissance Squadron "Ziemi
Czerwińskiej"
- 315 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Dębliński"
- 316 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Warszawski"
- 317 (Polish) Fighter Squadron "Wileński"
- 318 (Polish) Fighter/reconnaissance Squadron "Gdański"
In Italy
- 663 (Polish) Artillery Observation Squadron: 2 PolCorps
- Also 145 Squadron (Polish Fighting Team) also known as
"Skalski's Circus" in Africa.
- 112 'Shark' Fighter Squadron in Africa.

POLISH NAVY

Polish Ships:	Destroyer ORP-BŁYSKAWICA	To Poland
	Destroyer ORP-BURZA	To Poland
	Destroyer ORP-GROM	Lost 1940
	Submarine ORP-ORZEŁ	Lost 1940
	Submarine ORP-WILK	To Poland
	Training Ship ORP-ISKRA	To Poland
	Training Ship ORP-WILIA	Lost 1944

French and	Destroyer ORP-OURAGAN	To France 1941
Belgian ships:	Patrol Boat ORP-MEDOC	Lost 1940
	Patrol Boat ORP-POMEROL	Retired 1940
	12 Fast Patrol Boats ORP-P1 to P12	
	2 Submarine Hunters ORP-CH11 and CH15	

Ships from Royal Navy:	Cruiser ORP-CONRAD (HMS Danae)	
		Returned to Fleet
	Cruiser ORP-DRAGON (HMS Dragon)	
		Lost 1944
	Destroyer ORP-GARLAND (HMS Garland)	
		To Fleet
	Destroyer ORP-KRAKOWIAK (HMS Silverton)	
		Returned To Fleet
	Destroyer ORP-KUJAWIAK (HMS Oakley)	
		Lost 1942
	Destroyer ORP-ORKAN (HMS Myrmidon)	
		Lost 1943
	Destroyer ORP-PIORUN (HMS Nerissa)	
		Returned To Fleet
	Destroyer ORP-ŚLĄZAK (HMS Bedale)	
		Returned To Fleet)
	Submarine ORP-DZIK (Purpose built)	
		Returned To Fleet
	Submarine ORP-JASTRZĄB (USS S-25)	
		Lost 1942
	Submarine ORP-SOKÓŁ (HMS Urchin)	
		Returned To Fleet
	Armoured Patrol Boat ORP-CHART	
		Retired 1943
	Armoured Patrol Boat ORP-WILCZUR	
		Retired 1944
	Armoured Patrol Boat ORP-WYZEŁ	
		Retired 1943
	7 Motor Torpedo Boats ORP-S4 to S11	
	2 Special Duty Patrol Boats ORP-SEAWOLF + ORP-DOGFISH	

APPENDIX B

MESSAGE FROM THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE POLISH FORCES UNDER BRITISH COMMAND.

His Majesty's Government have many times made it clear that it is their policy to assist the greatest possible number of members of the Polish Armed Forces under British Command to return to Poland of their own free will and in conditions worthy of their great services to the Allied cause. In accordance with this policy they have in recent months been in negotiation with the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, which the British Government, like other Governments, regard as the only authority entitled to speak on behalf of Poland, regarding the conditions upon which returning Polish soldiers, sailors and airmen will be received back in their own country. As a result of these negotiations the Provisional Government has furnished His Majesty's Government with a statement setting forth its policy on this question. The text of this statement is annexed.

The British Government regard this statement as satisfactory. **[They are satisfied that it represents the firm policy of the Polish Provisional Government and that that Government will abide by the detailed assurances it contains.]**[1] In the light of these assurances they have reviewed the position of the Polish Armed Forces under British Command. They consider it to be the duty of all members of these forces who possibly can do so to return to their home country without further delay under the conditions now offered them in order that they may make their contribution to the restoration of the prosperity of liberated Poland. Only thus can they serve their country in a manner worthy of her great traditions.

Those who nevertheless feel compelled to remain abroad in full knowledge of the present situation will be treated as far as our resources permit with due recognition of their gallant service. In execution of the policy announced by Mr. Winston Churchill, the British Government will give, in collaboration with other Governments, such assistance as is in their power to enable those who fought with us throughout the war to start a new life outside Poland with their families and dependents. But the British Government, after the most careful examination of the whole problem, are bound to make it plain that they can promise no more than this. There is no question of the Polish Army, Navy or Air Force at present under British Command being preserved by the British Government as independent armed forces abroad, and it is the intention of the British Government to disband as soon as practicable those men who decide not to return to Poland. Nor can the British Government offer to the members of the Polish Armed Forces under British Command any guarantee that they will all be

enabled to settle in British territory at home or overseas. [...or that special measures will be taken to enable them to acquire British nationality.][2][On the other hand all those who go back to Poland will return in uniform and with full military honours and privileges under the conditions which the British Government have been formally authorised by the Polish Provisional Government to make known on their behalf.][3]

I appeal on behalf of the British Government to every individual member of the Polish Armed Forces to consider carefully the alternatives which are here set before him. I earnestly trust that the overwhelming majority will decide to avail themselves of this opportunity, especially as I am not in a position to guarantee that there will be a further opportunity for them to return to Poland.

Speaking on behalf of the British Government, I declare that it is in the best interests of Poland that you should return to her now, when she requires the help of all her sons in the arduous task of reconstructing the country and making good the devastation caused by the war.

Ernest Bevin.

[Highlighted extracts removed at FO:

[1] FO371 56365 N1042

[2] Ibid.

[3] FO371 56370 N3009]

STATEMENT BY POLISH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

1. The treatment of the Polish Armed Forces returning to Poland from abroad has already been demonstrated in practice, in the case of those soldiers who have returned from France and Italy. The same principle will also be adopted towards those returning home from other territories.

No punitive measures or reprisals will be carried out against returning officers and soldiers, except in the following cases:

(a) Against persons who served in the German Forces.

It should be added here that all persons who served with the German authorities were divided into four groups of "Volksdeutsche." Groups 3 and 4 comprised those persons who had been compulsorily inscribed on the list of "Volksdeutsche." Group 2 comprised those persons whom the German authorities considered as deserving their confidence to a certain extent only. Group 1 comprised those persons who were considered to be completely loyal to the Hitler regime.

As far as these persons are concerned the general rules regarding the treatment of "Volksdeutsche" will also be applied to members of the Polish Armed Forces returning from abroad. Persons, previously domiciled in territories which were incorporated into the German Reich, and who had been classified into groups 3 and 4, will be automatically rehabilitated, while persons whom the German authorities classified as groups 1 and 2 will have to obtain their rehabilitation before the ordinary Law Courts. For persons previously domiciled in the so-called "General government" rehabilitation before the ordinary Law Courts will be obligatory because they adopted German nationality voluntarily and without any compulsion being exercised.

(b) Against persons who are guilty of High Treason - as defined in the Polish Penal Code in force since the 1st September, 1932.

(c) Against persons guilty of common crimes as defined in the Polish Penal Code in force since 1st September, 1932. Returning members of the Polish Armed Forces will not, however, be charged retrospectively with offences under amendments to the penal code introduced by the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, where the acts in question were committed before the said amendments were introduced.

The Amnesty Decree of 21st August, 1945, will be applied to all members of the Polish Armed Forces returning from abroad.

2. The sacrifices of the Polish soldiers who fought on many fronts under the colours of our Western Allies are accorded equal recognition with the gallantry of the Polish Army formed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Consequently, these soldiers when returning to Poland will be treated on an equal footing with all soldiers of the re-born Polish Forces. This, of course, covers also the right to pensions.

3. Soldiers liable to demobilisation will be demobilised, and those expressing the wish to choose a professional military career will be enabled to enter officers' and NCOs. training schools and remain in the Forces. Those demobilised may be liable for service in the Reserve on the same basis as other demobilised members of the Polish Forces.

Rank, length of service, decorations and military awards won by officers and soldiers in the fight against Germany - no matter on what battlefield - will be recognised and taken into account.

4. Those who are demobilised have the same right to the grants of land, which is being distributed among soldiers, as the demobilised soldiers of the re-born Polish Forces.

5. War invalids will receive allowances and pensions in accordance with existing laws.

All the points dealt with in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above have been covered in the public announcements which the President of Poland's National Council, M. Bierut, made at a press conference at the Ministry of Information and Propaganda in Warsaw, as well as in an appeal of the Government of National Unity issued to all Polish officers, soldiers, sailors and airmen abroad.

These points have also been the subject of an expose by the Minister of National Defence, Marshal Zymierski, at a Meeting of the Polish National Council on 1st January, 1945. Moreover, they were also included in the Order of the Day issued by the Commander-in-Chief on the occasion of the First of May, the National Day, 3rd May, Independence Day, 22nd July, and the anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald. Moreover, they have been mentioned in a speech delivered on the first anniversary of the First Division, and in an interview given by Marshal Zymierski to the representative of the Polpress Agency on 2nd August, 1945.

6. The members of the Polish Armed Forces will be allowed to bring their personal belongings into Poland free of duty. They will be allowed to transfer their sterling accounts in the United Kingdom to Poland. For this purpose account-holders will have to make an application to the British authorities for the transfer of their sterling balances, or any part thereof, to an account of the National Bank of Poland with the Bank of England. On this basis an account will be opened for them in Polish banks. The payments from these accounts will be effected accordingly to the current exchange rates as announced by the Polish authorities to members of the Polish Armed Forces. (The Polish authorities state that their present exchange rate for this purpose is, together with subsidies, 420 zloty to the £ sterling.)

7. On their return to Poland members of the Polish Armed Forces originating from the provinces east of the Curzon Line will, automatically be regarded by the Polish Government as Polish citizens if they are of Polish or Jewish race and will not be required to perform any act signifying that they wish to choose Polish citizenship.

8. Families of members of the Polish Armed Forces who are now scattered all over the world, for instance East Africa, Iran, Palestine, South America, etc., are allowed to join soldiers, members of their families, in Poland.

9. Telegraphic and postal communication with Poland has been basically restored; it needs only technical improvement.

Persons returning to Poland as demobilised soldiers will be provided with assistance and information in the Polish Repatriation Offices, which have been set up on the frontier and in different Polish towns.

Hansard (Commons) Volume 420, P1880
20th March, 1946.

(See also PRO: FO371 56365 N1042)

APPENDIX C(PRO: FO371 56388 N8991)2 POLCORPS ESTABLISHMENT IN U.K. 1946.

<u>COMMAND</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>No. OF</u>	<u>TROOPS</u>
SCOTCO	Berwickshire	1,930	
	Roxburghshire	1,880	
	Wigtownshire	830	
		-----	HQ Artillery
		4,640	Group/Base Troops
NORCO	Derbyshire	580	
	Lincolnshire	5,730	
	Northumberland	5,080	
	Yorkshire	4,780	
		-----	HQ 2nd Armd Div/
		16,170	2nd Armoured Div
SOUTCO	Wiltshire	6,540	
	Gloucestershire	4,720	
	Berkshire	1,200	
	Oxfordshire	3,530	
		-----	HQ 5th Inf Div/
		15,990	5th Infantry Div
EASTCO	Buckinghamshire	4,970	
	Hertfordshire	860	
	Norfolk	12,850	
	Suffolk	650	
	Huntingdonshire	200	
	Sussex	3,760	
		-----	HQ 14th Armd Bde/
		23,290	14th Armoured Bde
			HQ 3rd Inf Div/
			3rd Infantry Div
WESCO	Cumberland	26,850	
	Lancashire	6,790	
	Yorkshire	170	
	Cheshire	1,330	
	Anglesey	3,560	
	Derby	840	
	Merioneth	490	
	Shropshire	1,240	
	Stafford	5,100	
	Montgomeryshire	1,730	
	Brecon	1,450	
	Hereford	7,260	
	Pembroke	2,060	
	Glamorgan	1,850	
		-----	HQ 2 Polcorps/
		60,720	Base Troops
		=====	
TOTAL		120,810	

APPENDIX E

POLISH ARMED FORCES, MAY 1945

POLISH LAND FORCES:

<u>WESTERN FRONT</u> :	1st Armoured Division	:	16,000
	Other Units, France	:	2,000

			18,000

<u>ITALIAN FRONT</u> :	2nd Polish Corps (Corps Units)	:	11,950
	3rd Carpathian Rifle Division	:	16,010
	5th Kresowa Infantry Division	:	15,940
	2nd Armoured Brigade	:	3,870
	2nd Artillery Group	:	8,010
			=====
			55,780

RESERVE FORCES : SCOTLAND

	1st Polish Corps	:	8,391
	4th Infantry Division	:	12,800
	16th Independent Armoured Brig.	:	3,096
	1st Parachute Brigade	:	4,169
	Other Units	:	25,778
			=====
			54,234

MIDDLE EAST

	7th Infantry Division	:	12,800
	16th Pomorska Infantry Brig.	:	3,430
	14th Independent Armoured Brig.	:	3,096
	Other Units	:	17,180
			=====
			36,506

	Polish Woman's Auxiliary Service	:	6,700
--	----------------------------------	---	-------

			=====
	Total Reserve	:	97,440

			=====
	<u>TOTAL POLISH LAND FORCES</u>	:	171,220

<u>POLISH AIR FORCE</u> :	15 Squadrons and Teaching Units:	:	19,400
---------------------------	----------------------------------	---	--------

<u>POLISH NAVY</u> :		:	3,840
----------------------	--	---	-------

			=====
	<u>TOTAL POLISH ARMED FORCES</u>	:	194,460

CIVILIANS AND DEPENDENTS

FROM GERMANY	2,000
FROM ITALY	10,000
FROM MIDDLE EAST/ AND AFRICA	15,000
FROM INDIA	3,000
AIR FORCE FAMILIES	2,600

	32,600
EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER WORKERS	14,018
	=====
TOTAL	46,618

B.Czaykowski/B.Sulik
Polacy W W.Brytanii
Instytut Literacki
Paryż, 1961.

APPENDIX F

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

I am directed by Mr. Secretary Bevin to refer to your letter of the... regarding Mr. Bevin's statement in the House of Commons on the 22nd May about the Polish Armed forces.

2. The troops which are being brought to the United Kingdom will be distributed throughout England and Scotland, all but about 6,000 being stationed in England.

3. As regards your fear that their presence will cause unemployment, there can be no doubt that, this country is at present short of manpower to fulfil our world wide commitments and to produce the exports by which we live. Such unemployment as there is at present is due to the peculiar conditions of the change over from a war economy to peace-time conditions rather than to a shortage of jobs. His Majesty's Government are satisfied that it will be possible to employ the proposed Polish Resettlement Corps in such a way that it will not compete with British labour to the disadvantage of the latter. This whole aspect of the matter has of course been carefully considered, and care has been taken to proceed in close consultation with the Trades Union Congress who have promised their co-operation.

4. Further the Resettlement Corps is a purely provisional and transitional expedient and it is probable that a large proportion of its members will eventually, if they do not return to Poland, decide to emigrate to other countries willing to receive them. The majority have nothing to tie them to this country and will doubtless move on elsewhere if given the opportunity. This would particularly be the case if on leaving the Resettlement Corps they were to find the labour market already saturated.

5. The extra training given to Poles will be confined to that necessary to enable them to do such work as is allotted to them efficiently. One of its main features will be instruction in the English language, which is of course essential to them in civilian life and of which the majority are ignorant.

6. As regards the housing question all the Polish troops and their families now coming to the United Kingdom will be accommodated in hutted camps which have been occupied by our own troops and are now vacant as a result of demobilisation.

7. As regards the question of the food of the Polish troops, they have been largely fed from British military sources while in Italy. Their removal to the United Kingdom will simply entail a redirection of the necessary foodstuffs.

8. The relative total increase in the food consumption of this country will have no appreciable effect on the food standards of the British population.

Supplementary;

Of the 109,500 Polish troops in Italy and the Middle East over 80,000 neither fought for nor assisted the enemy in any way. Of the remainder about 22,500 were captured or deserted (often at great personal risk) from the German forces into which they had been conscripted, and have since fought in battle on the Allied side. The other 6,000 were recruited into the Polish Armed Forces between the end of hostilities in Italy and the end of the war, many of them having been held as prisoners by the Germans.

(PRO: FO371 56514 N8775)

APPENDIX G

SOME OF THE CASES ILLUSTRATING POINTS RAISED IN AGENDA FOR THE SECOND MEETING OF THE RESETTLEMENT COMMITTEE / POLES /.

Part I. New Matters, Para I. General Problems concerning employment of PRC soldiers.

1/. In Reading a builders firm / Wallingforth / offered to employ 40 Polish soldiers, among them 11 draftsmen. The local Labour Exchange gave its consent with the stipulation that no Pole in this firm is to be paid more than standard wages for unskilled building operatives.

At present all required number of Poles, including craftsmen, are employed though the latter group had to come to some private arrangement with their employer.

2/. BIELA Jan and CHAJEWSKI Józef, carpenters fully qualified with British certificates for exams passed in the United Kingdom, were employed by I. Laing & Co Ltd., Building Contractors, Croydon. Local Labour Exchange gave its consent for their employment as craftsmen. After a certain time, however, they were informed that owing to Labour Exchange objections they could not continue to work as craftsmen and must be paid off, unless they accept the pay of unskilled labourers.

As neither of them could afford to be unemployed while looking for another job, they had to accept degrading.

3/. Staff sgts SAJMAGA S., KOWALIK C., both carpenters with 8 years experience, were employed by a big building firm in Portsmouth / Taylor & Woodrow /. On August 15th they were sent for by the manager of the firm and Labour Exchange representative, and the former informed them that he must sack them, owing to T.U. / Amalgamated Woodworkers Union ? / objections.

It should be stressed that the Labour Exchange representative told them that they could continue to work with the same firm as unskilled labourers only. Alternatively, they could obtain work in another place as carpenters but no guarantee could be given that the same thing would not happen in the new place.

Is [sic] should be added that the firm is highly satisfied with the work of these Poles and has vacancies for 50 more. There are 8 more Polish carpenters in the same firm, who share the lot of their mates.

Besides the carpenters, there are 80 Polish workers employed by this firm among them some bricklayers who are not at present affected by that decision.

The above mentioned staff sergeants, both with good military records, came with the 1 Armd Division from Germany, and were among the first, despite their higher NCO rank, to follow the advice of their superiors and take up civilian jobs. Both are at present in great distress and ask, either for return to their units or, for the possibilities of emigration.

4/. Ministry of Labour and National Service Circular 58/23. In various local Labour Exchanges it has become a general practice to interpret this in the following way:

- a/ A member of the PRC whether he is skilled worker or not, after an explanation that no other work is available, is offered an unskilled work in agriculture or in industry. Little effort is being made / there have been many such cases in London and Lowlands area / to obtain employment for skilled craftsmen.
- b/ A single refusal to accept such a job suffices for the Labour Exchange to submit the case for sanctions in accordance with the above mentioned circular.

The results of this procedure greatly weakens arguments of the PRC employment officers in favour of agricultural work, as soldiers faced with such procedure get impression that agricultural jobs must be bad ones if it is found necessary to use such methods of pressure.

5/. 2nd/Lt U.Adler, a mechanical engineer, has been employed by a firm / Deires / with a stipulation made by Reading Labour Exchange that he could only perform manual work.

In the meantime the employer satisfied with his work intended to promote him to the status of an engineer but failed to obtain the consent of the Labour Exchange.

6/. Cpl. J.Sagan from 105, Basic Unit found work as a farm labourer in Echt, Aberdeenshire. After a few weeks his employer / Mr Watt / found a youngster / 18 years / whose wages were lower, so he sacked Sagan. Another job has been found for Sagan by Labour Exchange but when he expressed a wish to become a miner he was refused on the grounds that he was already registered as a farm labourer.

7/. A private from Johnston Camp, a smelter, has obtained an offer of employment in London. Four months have elapsed since he applied to the local Labour Exchange for approval of this work without any definite answer. Meanwhile he works as a farm labourer.

8/. 105 B.U. Causewayhead nr Stirling

Staff Sgt A.Drozdowski,

Lc/cpl A.Wojciechowski,

Pte A. Brzezicki - all of them craftsmen; they obtained permission of the Labour Exchange to work with Bkuebech Estates Ltd., Bechwishhaw [sic], Sussex. The notes were, however, inserted in their E.O.806 that they were released as farm labourers.

It is feared that this will cause them trouble in the event of another change of work.

Polish Institute and
Sikorski Museum
GSHI: A.XII. 66/3

"To mark the 25th anniversary of the Red Army, in February 1943, there were celebrations in London, Glasgow, and in other British cities. His Majesty the King sent a telegram of congratulation to M. Kalinin and ordered the presentation of a Sword of Honour to Stalingrad. Above is Mr. Cowan Dobson's impression of the great meeting in St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, which was attended by representative units of the Armed Forces and Civic Defence Services. Mr. Duff Cooper is on the platform, which is decorated with the flag of St. Andrew, and the national emblem of the U.S.S.R. The painting was sent to Russia as a tribute from the people of Glasgow." [3]

APPENDIX J

REPORT OF THE REPATRIATION POLL OF DISPLACED PERSONS IN UNRRA ASSEMBLY CENTRES IN GERMANY FOR THE PERIOD 1-14 MAY 1946: ANALYSIS OF NEGATIVE VOTES.

Typical Negative Replies on the Ballots of the Principal Nationality Groups. - Poles

1. "Poland is not free."
2. "The Russians are dominating the Polish Government."
3. "Quoting Mr.Churchill's speech: an 'iron curtain' is hanging from Stettin to Trieste. Behind it an ignorant slave state is hidden from the eyes of us all, etc."-"I am a Democrat, not a Communist."
4. "Communist dictatorship. No freedom of personal opinion. Russians annihilate everything that is not Russian and communistic."
5. "Stalin annihilates people as well as Hitler."
6. "I don't trust Stalin and his government in Poland."
7. "Uncertain situation in Poland. The presence of the Soviet Army is dangerous to the freedom of my country."
8. "I don't agree with the policy of the Government and the persecution of the church and the lack of private property and freedom."
9. "I am afraid of Stalin, I am afraid of Siberia. Poland is not free."
10. "After the election of a democratic government, I shall return home."
11. "The Russians occupy that part of Poland where I lived. My home and family are gone."
12. "I can't find my family."
13. "I am ill and tired after the hard work in Germany."
14. "If I go back I am sure they will kill me or send me to Siberia."
15. "They sent part of my family to Siberia and confiscated our farm."
16. "I have been persecuted by the Communists and condemned for exile to Siberia. I don't want to try to live under the Communists again."
17. "My husband is not going back home and so I don't want to go."
18. "When I get a letter from my family saying that they are alive, then I shall return home."
19. "Because there is starvation in my country."
20. "My family is in America. I shall wait until I can also go there."

Boshyk, Yury Ukraine During World War II. History and Aftermath (Canadian Institutof Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1986.) Pp 217-218

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- [1] Keegan, John : Six Armies in Normandy (Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, 1983) Page 263

CHAPTER 1

- [1] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Polish Immigrants in Britain - A study of Adjustment (Martinus Nijhof, The Hague, 1956) Page 57
- [2] Keegan, John : Six Armies in Normandy op cit. Page 282
- [3] Barker, Anthony - Reuters Report from Warsaw, 23rd April, 1995 : "Sweet Victory Over Nazis Had Bitter Consequences For Poles"
- [4] Hammerton, Sir John : The Second Great War (Waverley Book Company Ltd) Volume 5, Page 1920
- [5] Verbatim translation of Victory Day speech made in Warsaw, 8th May, 1995. Live Satellite broadcast by "TV Polonia" (Programy Wojskowe i Obronne, TVP S.A., 1995)
- [6] Żymierski, Marshałek Michał & Generał Marian Spychalski Wojsko Polskie 1944-1947 : Wybór Rozkazów, Przemówień i Artykułów (Prasa Wojskowa, Warszawa, 1947) Speech made 2nd January, 1945, to National People's Council. Page 26
- [7] Biegański, Witold Polskie Siły Zbrojne na Zachodzie 1939-1945 (Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Warszawa, 1990) Page 155
- [8] Jurgielewicz, Wacław Organizacja Ludowego Wojska Polskiego (22.VII.1944 - 9.V.1945) (Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1968) Page 415
- [9] Grzelak, Czesław (et al.) : Bez Możliwości Wyboru. Wojsko Polskie na Froncie Wschodnim (Bellona, Warszawa, 1991) Page 220
- [10] Poksiński, Płk dr hab. Jerzy - During the programme "Za Wszelką Cenę" broadcast 8th May, 1995, by "TV Polonia" (Programy Wojskowe i Obronne, TVP S.A., 1995)
- [11] GSHI KGA 6a/10 Letter from MacMillen to Anders, 7th June, 1946.
- [12] "The Times" 6th June, 1946. Page 3

- [13] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty - Losy Żołnierzy
Polskich na Zachodzie 1945-1949 (Ministerstwo
Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1987) Page 105
- [14] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie (Krajowa
Agencja Wydawnicza, Kraków, 1984) Page 159
- [15] Szmagier, Krzysztof : Generał Anders i Jego Żołnierze
(Pax, Warszawa, 1993) Page 35
- [16] PRO FO371/56369 N2698 Report of February 1946.
- [17] Coates, W.P. & Z.K. : Six Centuries of Russo-Polish
Relations (Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1948)
Pp 151/2
- [18] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds.
Crisis in the Soviet Empire from Yalta to
Solidarity (BBC Books, London, 1984) Page 28
- [19] See S.P.K. : O Prawde i Sprawiedliwość - Pomnik
Katyński w Londynie (SPK-Gryf Publications
Ltd, London, 1977) for an account of the
controversial monument.
- [20] "The Times" 15th September. 1976, Page 17
- [21] Ibid.
- [22] "Soldier - Magazine of the British Army" 28th November,
1994. Pp. 14/17 "Paras step back in time to
revive old friendships" & "Mission of Peace
- Scots Guards in Poland"
- [23] Ellis, John : Cassino - A Hollow Victory. The Battle
For Rome. January - June 1944 (André Deutsch Ltd,
London, 1984) Page 470

CHAPTER 2

- [1] PRO FO371/47673 N10738 SACMED to WO, 18th August, 1945.
- [2] Kochanowicz, Tadeusz : Na Wojennej Emigracji (Książka
i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1979) Page 101
- [3] PRO FO371/47674 N10947 From Resident Minister's Office,
Central Mediterranean, Caserta, to the FO,
22nd August, 1945.
- [4] Hills, Denis : Return to Poland (The Bodley Head
Ltd, London, 1988) Page XIX
- [5] PRO FO371/56381 N6569 AFHQ Liason Section report
to SACMED, 14th May, 1946.

- [6] PRO FO371/56366 N1660 SACMED to FO, 5th February, 1946.
- [7] PRO FO371/56367 N1791 WO report for the FO, 11th January, 1946.
- [8] PRO FO371/56366 N1532 Lt Col Hemans (WO) to W.D.Allen (FO) February 1946.
- [9] PRO FO371/56379 N5961 Report by Major Gawronski to AFHQ, 24th April, 1946.
- [10] Czerkawski, Tadeusz : Byłem Żołnierzem Generała Andersa (Pax, Warszawa, 1991) Page 332
- [11] PRO FO371/56377 N5417 SACMED to FO, 24th April, 1946.
- [12] PRO FO371/47684 N14257 General Paget (C-in-C MEF) report to WO, 18th October, 1945.
- [13] PRO FO371/56390 N10523 Hankey note, 24th August, 1946.
- [14] PRO FO371/56367 N2069 undated/unnamed file minute
- [15] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit. Page 116
- [16] PRO FO371/56369 N2544 20th February, 1946. BBC Monitoring report for the FO.
- [17] PRO FO371/56399 N15367 "Polish Facts & Figures" No.22 16th November, 1946.
- [18] PRO FO371/56400 N15546 Hankey's file minute regarding Lapter's letter of the 30th November, 1946.
- [19] PRO FO371/56401 N16198 Lt Col Fitzgeorge-Balfour (WO) to Hancock of the FO, 18th December, 1946.
- [20] PRO FO371/56400 N15600 Draft of Hankey's letter dated 3rd December, 1946 but never sent.
- [21] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit. Page 61
- [22] PRO FO371/47684 N14126 16th October, 1945. Report by W.D. Allen
- [23] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie (Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1981) Page 73
- [24] Carrer, Jean : Across the Continents... In Search of Justice (Polish Home Army Veterans Circle, Chicago, Ill., 1970) Page 170

- [25] GSHI KOL138/127 (N1324) Colonel Bąkiewicz, 28th May, 1945. Sent by Station "R" in Rome.
- [26] PRO FO371/47900 Top Secret cipher from the SACMED (Alexander) to WO, 19th June, 1945
- [27] PRO WO214/63A SACMED (Alexander) to CIGS (Field-Marshal Sir Alan "Brookie" Brooke) 20th August, 1945.
- [28] PRO FO371/47906 N12839 FO to Secretary Chiefs of Staff Committee, 25th September, 1945.
- [29] PRO FO371/47906 N12858 File minute by John Galsworthy, 1st October, 1945.
- [30] Elliot, Mark : Pawns of Yalta : Soviet Refugees and America's Role in Their Repatriation (University Illinois Press, 1981) Page 93
- [31] PRO WO204/711 Captain Turowski, Chief Polish Base Censor. It is unclear whether the excisions in his reports were written by soldiers in English or whether they are his translations from Polish, in either case they are quoted here verbatim.
- [32] Bethell, Nicholas : The Last Secret : Forcible Repatriation To Russia 1944-7 (André Deutsch, London, 1974) Page 176
- [33] Ibid. Pp.206/7
- [34] Hills, Denis : Tyrants and Mountains - A Reckless Life (John Murray Ltd, London, 1992) Pp.131/134
- [35] GSHI KOL138/128 (P1184) Head of Station "W" in Ancona to Station "R" Rome, June 1945.
- [36] PRO WO204/440 General Anders to SACMED, 11th July, 1945.
- [37] Ibid. General Vassilieff to SACMED, 3rd August, 1945.
- [38] Ibid. Minutes of meeting at SACMED HQ, 18th August, 1945.
- [39] PRO WO214/63A SACMED (Alexander) to CIGS (Field-Marshal Sir Alan "Brookie" Brooke) 20th August, 1945.
- [40] PRO FO371/47904 N11134 General Ratov to General Thorpe, 21st August, 1945.
- [41] Tolstoy, Nikolai : Victims of Yalta (Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, London, 1977) Page 401

- [42] GSHI A.XII 66/21 HQ PRC to British Advisory Staff PRC, 2nd April, 1947.
- [43] Żaroń, Zbigniew : Wojenne Losy Ludności Polskiej na Obczyźnie w Latach 1939-1947 (Unicorn Publishing, London/Warszawa, 1994) Page 93
- [44] PRO FO371/56548 N4747 Rumbelow (Home Office Aliens Dept) to Colonel Sinclair (Military Intelligence), 5th April, 1946.
- [45] PRO FO371/66213 N6601 Hankey Memo, 10th June, 1947.
- [46] PRO FO371/66213 N7731 WO to Hankey, 2nd July, 1947.
(see also N7650 for details of planning)
- [47] PRO FO371/66214 N9063 Undated file minute by Hancock.
- [48] Hills, Denis : Tyrants and Mountains op cit. Page 112
- [49] PRO FO371/47661 N2502 WO to W.D.Allen at the FO, 5th March, 1945.
- [50] Tolstoy, Nikolai : Victims of Yalta op cit. Pp.335/6
- [51] PRO FO371/55979 N544 WO to CCG (BE), 27th October, 1945.
- [52] PRO FO371/71236 Undated minute regarding the expansion of the "Wetward Ho!" scheme.
- [53] PRO FO371/56026 N2565 Chuter Ede in an answer in the House of Commons, 21st February, 1946.
- [54] PRO FO371/56026 N4121 FO minute, 25th March, 1946.
- [55] PRO FO371/56509 N4010 Max Steinberg, Secretary to the "US Trade Union Committee for Jewish Unity" in a telegram to the FO, 26th March, 1946.
- [56] PRO FO371/47660 N279 General Beaumont-Nesbitt, AFHQ Liaison Section, in a Top Secret report for the WO, 16th December, 1944.
- [57] PRO WO106/3973 AFHQ to SACMED (Alexander, then in Athens) 15th February, 1945.
- [58] PRO WO214/54 SACMED TO AFHQ, 17th February, 1945.
- [59] PRO WO204/732 "Guidelines for Censorship" October, 1944.
- [60] Ibid. (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [61] Podoski, Jan : Zbyt Ciekawe Czasy (Wydawnictwo Komunikacji i Łączności, Warszawa, 1991) Pp.217/8

- [62] PRO WO204/732 (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [63] S.P.P. Armia Krajowa w Dokumentach 1944-1945 ; Tom V (Pazdziernik 1944 - Lipiec 1945) (Studium Polski Podziemnej, Londyn, 1981) Nr.1424, Pp.277/8
- [64] Churchill, Winston The Second World War : Volume 6, Triumph and Tragedy (Penguin Books, London, 1988)
- [65] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile (Macmillan, London, 1949) Pp.276/8 (also at PRO 371/47668 N8419)
- [66] PRO FO371/47668 N8419 WO Top Secret cipher to all Commands, 25th July, 1945.
- [67] PRO FO371/47669 N9353 File minute made by Christopher Warner at the FO, 6th July, 1945.
- [68] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Page 281
- [69] PRO FO371/47668 N8773 From AFHQ to the WO, 16th July, 1945, signed Alexander.
- [70] PRO WO204/732 (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [71] GSHI KGA28 (32) "Press Interviews - Instructions to Commanders" from HQ 26 BLU to HQ 2 Polcorps, 19th February, 1946.
- [72] PRO FO371/56382 N6856 The text of the letter is also in Anders, Władysław Bez Ostatniego Rozdziału : Wspomnien z Lat 1939-1946 (Montgomery Printing Co. Ltd, Newtown Wales, 1949)
- [73] PRO FO371/56384 N7330 FO translation of Anders' Order of the Day for 29th May, 1946. The original is also in Anders Bez Ostatniego Rozdziału op cit. Page 416
- [74] PRO FO371/56372 N3747 General Boruta-Spiechowicz in Top Secret talks with Brigadier Davy of WO BLU, 2nd March, 1946.
- [75] PRO WO214/54 AFHQ to Alexander, 31st August, 1945.
- [76] PRO FO371/56367 N2138 SACMED (General Morgan) to Cabinet Offices, 14th February, 1946.
- [77] Churchill, Winston : The Second World War : Volume 6 op cit. Pp.565/6
- [78] PRO WO32/12262 General Lyne, War Office Director of Staff Duties, to C.P.Hill at the FO Aliens Dept, 17th September, 1946.

- [79] PRO FO371/56368 N2270 Cipher from the FO to the British Embassy in Warsaw, 6th March, 1946.
- [80] PRO FO371/56386 N8437 FO translation of Anders' "Oath". 15th June, 1946.
- [81] PRO FO371/56385 N7792 15th June, 1946. BBC Monitoring report for the FO.
- [82] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Page 300
- [83] PRO FO371/56385 N7805 File minute at the FO, 17th June, 1946.
- [84] PRO FO371/56386 N8437 SACMED (General Morgan) cipher to the WO, 25th June, 1946.
- [85] PRO FO371/56365 N1042 Bevin to J.J. Lawson, Minister of War, 28th January, 1946.
- [86] PRO FO371/56463 N878 Resident Minister to AFHQ's report to the FO, 19th January, 1946.
- [87] PRO FO371/56386 N8197 Major Gawronski's report for the WO about "Atmosphere in Polcorps", 5th June, 1946.
- [88] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Pp.283/5
- [89] PRO WO106/3973 Colonel Bobiński - Order of the Day, 12th May, 1945.
- [90] GSHI C128 War Diary of 14th Armoured Brigade, Page 18
- [91] PRO CAB128/5 CM7(46) Cabinet Minutes, 22nd January, 1946. Pp.50/1
- [92] PRO FO371/56371 N3511 FO minute, 4th March 1946.
- [93] PRO FO371/56370 N3289 Top Secret WO cipher to all Commands, 6th March, 1946. All cipher traffic relating to "Keynote" was designated "Top Secret". In Germany the FO produced a form to be signed by British Officers that:
"I..... (rank, name and regiment) undertake not to permit any person to see or read the context of the WARSAW Government's Terms, The British Secretary of State For Foreign Affairs' statement nor the War Office covering letter until 0900 hrs..... Mar 46" (See FO1063/84)
- [94] PRO FO371/56370 N3295 Top Secret ciphers between GHQ CMF and WO 6th March, 1946.

- [95] PRO FO371/56370 N3014 Top Secret WO cipher to General Paget, C-in-C MEF, 3rd March, 1946.
- [96] GSHI A.XII.35/17 (P689) Cipher from OC Quartermaster Corps of 2 Polcorps, 19th March, 1946.
- [97] PRO FO371/56371 N3544 Top Secret cipher from Admiralty to all C-in-Cs of naval bases served by Poles, 13th March, 1946.
- [98] PRO FO371/56373 N4063 Top Secret AFHQ Interim Report to SACMED, General Morgan, then on a visit to London. 22nd March, 1946.
- [99] PRO FO371/56373 N4070 Report by Colonel Tappin, Head of AFHQ Liaison Section, 26th March, 1946.
- [100] GSHI A.XII.35/17 (P690) Station "W" in Ancona to Colonel Bąkiewicz, OC 2 Polcorps Intelligence, 21st March, 1946.
- [101] PRO FO371/56373 N4063 Top Secret cipher from AFHQ to WO, 22nd March, 1946.
- [102] PRO FO371/56374 N4382 The file contains a collection of the "Keynotes" that were returned by Polish troops whose comments were either in basic English or translated from Polish at the FO and quoted here verbatim.
- [103] Ibid.
- [104] PRO FO371/56373 N3990 Draft FO report for the British Embassy in Warsaw, 22nd March, 1946.
- [105] GSHI C128 War Diary of 14th Armoured Brigade. Page 72
- [106] GSHI C707 War Diary of HQ 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division, Page 116
- [107] Anders, Władysław : Bez Ostatniego Rozdziału op cit. Page 398
- [108] "The Times" 25th March, 1946. Page 5
- [109] Potocki, Jerzy writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów 1878-1958 (Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1979; edited by Kazimierz Koźniewski) Page 223
- [110] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit. Page 125
- [111] PRO FO371/56374 N4540 Report from BBC Monitoring for the FO, 21st March, 1946.

- [112] PRO FO371/56380 N6348 Text of Kot's complaint as reported to FO from Rome, 14th May, 1946.
- [113] PRO FO371/56368 N2272 Cavendish-Bentinck to FO, 19th February, 1946.
- [114] Marrus, Michael R. : The Unwanted : European Refugees in the Twentieth Century (Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, 1985) Page 323
- [115] PRO FO371/56361 N45 Cavendish-Bentinck at the 6th meeting of the Polish Armed Forces Committee, 4th January, 1946 - quoted from the minutes.
- [116] "The Times" 21st March, 1946. Page 8 [See also Hansard (Commons) Vol. 420 Pl879]
- [117] PRO FO371/56627 N4007 Minutes of the Ministerial Committee on Polish Questions, 4th April, 1946.
- [118] PRO FO371/56627 N2615 Minutes of the Ministerial Committee on Polish Questions, 20th February, 1946.
- [119] PRO FO371/56634 N13392 FO reply to Ministry of Labour. 15th October, 1946.
- [120] GSHI A.XII.35/17 (P749) Head of Station "W" in Ancona, Colonel Bąkiewicz, to his subordinate stations in Italy, 25th May, 1946.
- [121] PRO FO371/56385 N7755 Report by Brigadier Davy, OC WOLS, on the arrival of 2 Polcorps in Great Britain, 5th June, 1946.

CHAPTER 3

- [1] Filipow, Krzysztof & Wawer, Zbigniew : Przechodniu Powiedz Polsce... Narvik, Tobruk, Monte Cassino, Falaise (Arkady, Warszawa, 1989) General Roman Paszkowski writing the forward to the book in his role as Head of the Council for the Preservation of Monuments to Combat and Martyrdom [Rada Ochrony Pamięci Walk i Męczeństwa] Page 6
- [2] Mrowiec, Alfons : Przez Monte Cassino 1944-1946 (Śląsk, Katowice, 1959) Page 204
- [3] Wojciech Łęski writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów (editor Koźniewski, Kazimierz) op cit. Page 346
- [4] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 66
- [5] Carrer, Jean : Across the Continents op cit. Page 165

- [6] Koźniewski, Kazimierz - introduction to Pamiętniki Emigrantów op cit. Pp.7/8
- [7] Machalski, General Tadeusz : Co WidziaŁem i PrzeżyŁem (Veritas Foundation Publication Centre, London, 1980) Pp.289/290
- [8] PRO WO204/732 (see note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [9] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Page 31
- [10] Mrowiec, Alfons : Przez Monte Cassino op cit. Page 204
- [11] Rutkowski, Stanisław : Wychowanie Żołnierzy w Polskich Burżuazyjnych Formacjach Wojskowych Podczas II Wojny Światowej (1939-1945) (Wojskowa Akademia Polityczna im. F. Dzierżyńskiego, Warszawa, 1967) Page 86
- [12] Wankowicz, Melchior : Bitwa o Monte Cassino (Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1989) Volume 1, Pp.214/6
- [13] PRO WO204/732 (see note for Chapter 2 [31])
12-27th June, 1944.
- [14] PRO FO371/39514 C3255 March 1944, FO Minutes.
- [15] PRO WO204/732 (see note for Chapter 2 [31])
12-27th August, 1944.
- [16] Newman, Bernard : Russia's Neighbour - The New Poland (Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1946) Page 186
- [17] Umiastowski, R. : Poland, Russia and Great Britain, 1941-1945. A Study of Evidence (Hollis & Carter, London, 1946) Citing "Pravda" - 12th February, 1944. Page 228
- [18] Sidor Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Anders (Arti graf Onorati, Rzym, 1947) Page 193
- [19] PRO FO371/56377 N5391 18th February, 1946. FO circular to its principal embassies world-wide.
- [20] Czerkowski, Tadeusz : ByŁem Żołnierzem... op cit. Page 341
- [21] Dzikiewicz, B. : Z Teodolitem pod Monte Cassino (Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1984) Page 214

- [22] Dziesięciolecie Polskich Oddziałów Wartowniczych przy Armii Amerykańskiej w Europie. 1944-1955 (Praca Zbiorowa; Nakładem Funduszu Społecznego O.W., Mannheim, 1955) Page 14
- [23] PRO FO371/56709 N16053 Report by Sir Donald Gainer, British Ambassador in Brazil, to the FO. (Sir Donald went on to replace Cavendish-Bentinck in Warsaw) The incident is also highlighted in AAN 168/993 - Press review for the Central Committee of the PPR, 12th December, 1946.
- [24] "West Sussex County Times" 20th January, 1947. Page 1
Headline : "Polish Soldiers Suicide"
- [25] Machalski, General Tadeusz : Co Widziałem... op cit.
Page 289
- [26] Paff, Lucjan : Kresowa Walczy w Italii (Referat Kultury i Prasy Kresowej Dywizji Piechoty, Italia, 1945)
Undated speech by General Sosnkowski, Page 108
- [27] Rudnicki DSO, K.S. : The Last of the War Horses (Backman & Turner, London, 1974) Page 255
- [28] GSHI C129/II War Diary 13 Battn, 5th Kresowa Division. reporting a speech by General Anders. Undated/no page number.
- [29] Ibid.
- [30] Sosabowski, Gen. Stanisław : Droga Wiodła Ugorem (Veritas, London, 1967) Page 184
- [31] AAN 284/290 Report for the Year 1946
- [32] AAN 522/405 Report bt Lt Proczka to PUR, undated.
- [33] "Karta" October 1993. Interview with Zygmunt Boger. Page 21
- [34] PRO FO371/56481 N117 Hankey file minute, 2nd January, 1946.
- [35] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Soldiers and Peasants : The Sociology of Polish Migration (Orbis Books, London, 1988) Page 132
- [36] Anders, Władysław : Bez Ostatniego Rozdziału op cit.
Page 409
- [37] Thielmann, Edmund : Żołnierska Odyseja (Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1971) Page 251

- [38] Kochanowicz, Tadeusz : Na Wojennej Emigracji op cit.
Pp. 284/5
- [39] Mrowiec, Alfons : Przez Monte Cassino op cit. Pp. 206/8
- [40] Nowakowski, Zygmunt : Na Przystanku - List do
Niezanego Przyjaciela Plynacego do Anglii
(Williams, Lea & Co., London, 1946) Page 30
- [41] Karczewski, M. (editor): Polscy Spadochroniarze -
Pamiętnik Żołnierzy (Montgomeryshire Printing
Co., Newtown, Wales, 1949) Page 367
- [42] Rutkowski, Stanisław : Wychowanie Żołnierzy... op cit.
Page 96
- [43] Sosabowski, Gen. Stanisław : Droga Wiodła Ugorem
op cit. Page 186
- [44] "The Economist" 24th August, 1946. Page 287
- [45] Newman, Bernard : Russia's Neighbour op cit. Page 153
- [46] Szatsznajder, Jan : Drogi do Polski (Presstrust,
Wrocław, 1991) Interview with Mieczysław
Stelmaszyński, Pp. 212/3
- [47] Carrer, Jean : Across the Continents op cit. Pp.161/2
- [48] Krajewski, Janusz writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów op cit.
Pp. 366/7
- [49] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Soldiers and Peasants op cit. Citing
Jerzy Potocki. Page 156
- [50] Bethell, Nicholas : Gomulka, His Poland and His Communism
(Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd, London. 1969) Pp. 164/5
- [51] "The Economist" 24th August, 1946. Page 286
- [52] Kochanowicz, Tadeusz : Na Wojennej Emigracji op cit.
Page 284/5
- [53] PRO FO371/56374 N4382 Verbatim quotes of the original.
- [54] PRO WO204/732 (see note for Chapter 2 [31]) Both quotes
dated 27th July-12th August, 1944.
- [55] Anders, Władysław : Bez Ostatniego Rozdiału op cit.
Interview held 23rd June, 1946. Pp.421/2
- [56] Berberyusz, Ewa : Anders Spieszony (Anneks Publishers,
London, 1992) Interview with "Voce Adriatica",
13th January 1946. Page 59

- [57] Anderson, H. Foster : What I Saw in Poland - 1946
(The Windsor Press, Slough, 1946) Pp. 12/13
- [58] Mrowiec, Alfons : Przez Monte Cassino op cit. Page 205
- [59] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 148
- [60] Anderson, H. Foster : What I Saw in Poland - 1946 op cit.
Page 180
- [61] Thielmann, Edmund : Żołnierska Odyseja op cit. Page 257
- [62] Podoski, Jan : Zbyt Ciekawe Czasy op cit. Pp. 224/8
- [63] Popiel, Karol : Na Mogiłach Przyjaciół (Odnova, London,
1966) Page 68
- [64] Czerkowski, Tadeusz : Byłem Żołnierzem... op cit. Page 326
- [65] Kochanowicz, Tadeusz : Na Wojennej Emigracji op cit.
Pp. 284/5
- [66] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 59
- [67] PRO FO371/47684 N14204 Answer to Admiral Taylor
in the Commons, 15th October, 1945.
- [68] PRO FO371/47684 N14126 Report from FO to Hankey
in Warsaw, 19th October, 1945.
- [69] GSHI C473 Figures from "Dziennik Żołnierza APW",
19th December, 1945.
- [70] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Page 287
- [71] GSHI C598 War Diary 5th Battn, 2nd Brigade,
3rd Carpathian Rifle Division.
- [72] GSHI C679/II War Diary 4th Company, 4th Battn,
2nd Brigade, 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division.
- [73] GSHI C639 War Diary 3rd Battn, 1st Parachute Brigade.
- [74] GSHI C150/IV.c War Diary 7th Workshop Company, 7th Division
- [75] GSHI C128 War Diary 14th Armoured Brigade. Page 39
- [76] GSHI C401 War Diary 65th Battn, 16th Pomeranian Infantry
Brigade, 2nd Armoured Division.
- [77] GSHI C447/I War Diary No.1 Battery, 5th Field Artillery
Regiment.

- [78] GSHI C690 War Diary 3rd Heavy Machine Gun Company,
3rd HMG Battn, 3rd Carpathian Rifle Division
- [79] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Page 210
- [80] GSHI A.XII.66-4A Report for HQ PRC, undated.
- [81] AAN 522/376 PUR report, 7th November, 1945, about
future of 2 Infantry Division in Switzerland.
- [82] AAN 522/159 PUR report, undated, on Poles in
Switzerland.
- [83] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit.
Page 138 (see also PRO FO371/56578 N731)
- [84] AAN 522/159 Ambassador Strasburger to Foreign Minister
Modzelewski, 24th April, 1946.
- [85] AAN 522/160 Unsigned/undated PUR report.
- [86] PRO FO1049/622 Major Gondowicz, Polish Repatriation
Mission in Germany to HQ BAOR, 7th November, 1946.
- [87] "Karta" October 1993. Interview with Franciszek Janikowski.
Page 12
- [88] Ibid. Page 8. Interview with Ludwik Matuszek
- [89] PRO FO371/56380 N6161 A copy is held in this file.
- [90] Przewodnik dla Powracających Żołnierzy. Objasnienia
do Oświadczenia Tymczasowego Rządu Jedności
Narodowej o Sposobie Traktowania Żołnierzy
Polskich Sił Zbrojnych Powracających do Kraju
(Williams, Lea & Co., Ltd, London, 1946) Page 9
- [91] Szatsznajder, Jan : Drogi do Polski op cit. Interview
with Dżennet Skibniewska. Pp. 194/5
- [92] Kwasniewski to Polish Sejm, 9th November, 1993.
Verbatim translation: SWB 11 Nov.1993 ee/1843
A/11 [31] (BBC Monitoring, Caversham)

CHAPTER 4

- [1] Hotchkiss, Christine : Home to Poland (Farrar, Straus &
Cudahy, New York, 1988) For the Hymn's wartime
variant see Panie Pozostań z Nami - Modlitewnik
i Śpiewnik Polskie Duszpasterstwo Polowe W.P. na
Środkowym Wschodzie (Nakładem Sióstr Elżbietanek,
Jerusalem, 1942)

- [2] Berchin, I.B. : Istoriya SSSR - Sovyetskii Periyod
(Vishaya Shkola, Moskva, 1987) Page 390
- [3] Modelski, Tadeusz : The Polish Contribution to the
Ultimate Allied Victory in the Second World
War (Published by Author, Worthing, 1988) Page 89
- [4] "The Economist" 29th May, 1948. Page 878
- [5] PRO WO204/732 Situation Report for 12th-27th June, 1945,
by Captain Turowski, Chief Polish Base Censor written,
in English, for the WO.
- [6] PRO WO204/732 (see note for Chapter 2 [31]) Report for
27th July-12th August, 1944.
- [7] PRO WO106/3973 Report from Resident Ministers Office,
Caserta, to FO. 23rd June, 1945.
- [8] Deborin, Grigory : 30 Years of Victory (Progress
Publishers, Moscow, 1975) Pp. 225/9
- [9] Ciechanowski, Jan : Defeat in Victory (Victor Gollancz
Ltd, London, 1948) Page 336
- [10] Eade, Charles : The War Speeches of the Rt. Hon.
Winston S. Churchill (Volume 3) (Cassell & Co.,
London, 1952) 15th December, 1944. Page 310
- [11] Foot, M.R.D. : SOE - An Outline History of the Special
Operations Executive, 1940-46 (BBC Books, London,
1984) Page 197
- [12] Popiel, Karol : Na Mogiłach Przyjaciół op cit. Page 69
- [13] Kersten, Krystyna : The Establishment of Communist
Rule in Poland 1943-1948 (University of
California, Berkeley, Calif., 1991) Page 112
- [14] GSHI A.XV.4(2)c Article in "Wiadomości Kresowej",
3rd December, 1945. No.102 Pp. 2/3 "Czarny
Rejestr Polskiego Quislinga"
- [15] Korbonski, Stefan : Warsaw in Chains (George Allen &
Unwin Ltd, London, 1959) Entry for 30th July,
1945. Page 19
- [16] Ibid. Entry for 6th November, 1945. Page 43
- [17] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Pp. 258/9
- [18] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds
op cit. Page 40

- [19] AAN 168/710 Report from Lublin for Ministry of Propaganda and Information. 13th February, 1947.
- [20] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds
op cit. Page 39
- [21] Ibid. From an interview with Martin Gilbert, Churchill's official biographer. Page 33
- [22] Churchill, Winston : The Second World War : Volume 6, Triumph and Tragedy (Penguin Books, London, 1988)
Churchill's conversation with Stalin at Yalta, 8th February, 1945. Page 331
- [23] Ibid. Volume 5, Closing the Ring Page 351
- [24] Lubomirski, Eugeniusz : Kartki z Mego Zycia (Polska Fundacja Kulturalna, London, 1982) Page 153
- [25] Foot, M.R.D. : SOE op cit. Churchill in Cairo, December, 1943. Page 155
- [26] Habielski, R. : Niezłomni Nieprzejednani : Emigracyjne "Wiadomości" I Ich Krąg (Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa, 1991) Citing Nowakowski in "Wiadomosci" nr 38(77), 21st September, 1947. Page 69
- [27] Churchill, Winston : The Second World War : Volume 6
op cit. Page 581
- [28] Ibid. Page 582
- [29] Bethell, Nicholas : Gomulka op cit. Pp.130/1
- [30] Ibid. Page 105
- [31] Cole, G.D.H. : The Intelligent Man's Guide to the Post-War World (Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1947) Page 785
- [32] PRO FO371/47603 N9609 Letter to Christopher Warner, 25th July, 1945, from Potsdam (or "Terminal" as it was officially called) following a conversation between W.D.Allen of the FO and Mikołajczyk.
- [33] General Sikorski Historical Institute : Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939-1945 (Volume II. 1943-1945) (Heinemann, London, 1967) Doc. 384
Page 634

- [34] Umiastowski, R. : Poland, Russia and Great Britain
op cit. Page 507
- [35] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds
op cit. Page 50
- [36] AAN 168/710 Report by Ministry of Information and
Propaganda on pre-election rumours. 23rd December,
1946.
- [37] Churchill, Winston : The Second World War : Volume 6
op cit. Bierut to Churchill, July 24th, 1993.
Page 576
- [38] PRO FO371/56372 N3747 (see note for Chapter 2 [74])
- [39] PRO FO371/56596 N1530 Dr Stephen Taylor to Hector
McNeil, 26th January, 1946.
- [40] Ibid. Cavendish-Bentinck's opinions of Taylor's
findings.
- [41] PRO FO371/56441 N7868 This is a rare and most
undiplomatic outburst from Hankey. 14th June,
1946.
- [42] Hansard (Lords) V140, C242 19th March, 1946.
- [43] Anders, Władysław : An Army in Exile op cit. Page 289
- [44] PRO FO371/66150 N380 "Warsaw Weekly Summary No.1"
11th January, 1947
- [45] Staar, Richard F. : Poland 1944-1962 : The Sovietization of
a Captive People (Louisiana State University Press,
1962) Page 48
- [46] Mikołajczyk, Stanisław : The Rape of Poland - Pattern
of Soviet Aggression (Greenwood Press Publishers,
Westport, Connecticut, 1973) Page 164
- [47] Staar, R.F. : Poland 1944-1962 op cit. Page 49
- [48] Jędrzejewicz, Wacław : Poland in the British Parliament
1939-1945 (Józef Piłsudski Institute of America
for Research in the Modern History of Poland,
Inc., New York, 1962) Pp. 698/9
- [49] Raczyński, Count Edward : In Allied London (Weidenfeld
& Nicolson, London, 1962) Count Raczyński's note
to Eden, 6th July, 1945. Page 364
- [50] Jędrzejewicz, Wacław : Poland in the British Parliament
op cit. Page 509

- [51] Kersten, Krystyna : The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland op cit. Page 233
- [52] Ibid. Page 341
- [53] Lane, Arthur Bliss : I Saw Poland Betrayed Western Islands, Belmont, Mass., 1965) Pp. 253/4
- [54] Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne: 1-25, Sejm Ustawodawczy Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Sesja Nadzwyczajna I r.1947 Warszawa, 1947. Mikołajczyk to 1st Sitting of Sejm, 4th February, 1947. Page 36
- [55] Ibid. Delegate Kaczocha to 19th Sitting of Sejm, 23rd June, 1947. Page 95
- [56] Ibid. Delegate Ozga-Michalski to 20th Sitting of Sejm, 24th June, 1947. Page 90
- [57] Szaflik, Jozef R. : Historia Polski, 1939-1947 (Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa, 1979) Page 224
- [58] Carrere D'Encausse, Helene : Big Brother. The Soviet Union and Soviet Europe (Holmes & Meier Publishers, New York/London, 1987) Page 60
- [59] PRO FO371/56364 N707 Cavendish-Bentinck to FO, 14th January. 1946.
- [60] PRO FO800/490 FO report sent to Warsaw, 17th November, 1945, after meetings with Mikołajczyk on the 15th.
- [61] "The Times" 21st March, 1946. Page 8[See also Hansard (Commons) Vol. 420 Pl880]
- [62] PRO FO371/56395 N13781 Hankey to WO, 25th October, 1946, on Anders' interview with "The Times" on the 23rd.
- [63] Hansard (Commons) Volume 416, C621. Mr Mack speaking on the 22nd November, 1945.
- [64] PRO FO371/56374 N4569 Hankey note to Warsaw. 8th April, 1946. The original report dated 28th March, 1946.
- [65] Hansard (Commons) Volume 419, C1243. Professor Savory speaking on the 20th February, 1946.
- [66] PRO WO204/440 Top Secret Military Intelligence report to FO, 6th December, 1945.
- [67] PRO FO371/56365 N1042 Undated Christopher Warner file minute.

- [68] PRO FO371/56401 N15884 Answer to Commons question, 7th December, 1946.
- [69] PRO FO371/47674 N11079 Letter from Jessie Bradnum in Fife to FO, 21st August, 1945.
- [70] Raczynski, Count Edward : In Allied London Diary entry for 3rd June, 1945. Pp. 290/1
- [71] PRO FO371/66161 N7087 Hankey to Whetmath of the National Assistance Board, 3rd July, 1947.
- [72] Hansard (Commons) Volume 413, C296 Bevin during the debate on the King's speech, 20th August, 1945.
- [73] Tabori, Paul : The Anatomy of Exile : A Semantic and Historical Study (G.G.Harrap & Co., Ltd, London, 1972) Page 225
- [74] Podoski, Jan : Zbyt Ciekawe Czasy op cit. Podoski's story is typical of the rehabilitation that has taken place in Poland recently.
- [75] PRO FO371/66160 N5589 Confidential letter from Hankey to Colonel Fitzgeorge-Balfour (WO), 27th May, 1947.
- [76] PRO FO371/66258 N6319 Memorandum and Hankey minute dated 12th June, 1947, in the file : "Members of Polish Home Army Deported to the USSR".
- [77] PRO FO371/56596 N2779 Cavendish-Bentinck's talks with Dr Litwin, 19th February, 1946.
- [78] PRO FO371/56635 N13882 Letter from FO to the Exchequer, Hugh Dalton, 31st October, 1946.
- [79] PRO FO371/47674 N11078 Mrs Nowak writing from Glasgow to the FO, 21st August, 1945.
- [80] Lukas, Richard : Bitter Legacy : Polish-American Relations in the Wake of World War II (Kentucky University Press, Lexington, Ken., 1982) Page 21
- [81] Zochowski, Stanisław : O Narodowych Siłach Zbrojnych - NSZ (Retro, Lublin, 1994) Top Secret order from Minister of Public Security, Radkiewicz, to all UB offices, 4th December, 1945. Page 7
- [82] Rupnik, Jacques : The Other Europe (George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, London, 1988) Page 86
- [83] Syrop, Konrad : Poland : Between the Hammer and the Anvil (Robert Hale, London, 1968) Page 153

- [84] Churchill, Winston : The Second World War : Volume 6
op cit. Page 576
- [85] Piesakowski, Tadeusz : The Fate of the Poles in
the USSR 1939-1989 (Gryf Publications Ltd,
London, 1990) Page 192
- [86] Ibid. Page 208
- [87] S.P.P. : Armia Krajowa w Dokumentach 1944-1945 Tom
V (Październik 1944 - Lipiec 1945) (Studium
Polski Podziemnej, Londyn, 1981)
Document No. 1384, Page 231
- [88] Ibid. Document No. 1518, Page 387
- [89] Korbonski, Stefan : Warsaw in Chains op cit. Page 202
- [90] S.P.P. : Armia Krajowa w Dokumentach op cit. Document
No. 1476, Pp. 352/3
- [91] Ibid. Document No. 1525, Page 394
- [92] Ibid. Document No. 1413, Page 261
- [93] Żochowski, Stanisław : Brytyjska Polityka Wobec Polski
1916-1948 (Published by Author, Brisbane/London,
1979) Page 375
- [94] Ibid. Page 373
- [95] Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych - Biuro 'C' :
Informator o Nielegalnych Antypaństwowych
Organizacjach i Bandach Zbrojnych Działających w
Polsce Ludowej w Latach 1944-1956 (Retro, Lublin,
1993) The book was originally published in 1964
as a Top Secret report for the Warsaw Foreign
Ministry as a record of the various underground
groups that existed in Poland from 1944.
- [96] Brzezinski, Zbigniew : The Soviet Bloc - Unity &
Conflict (Harvard University Press, Cambridge,
Mass., 1967) Page 90
- [97] Topolski, Jerzy : Historia Polski - Od Czasów
Najdawniejszych do 1990 Roku (Polczek, Warszawa/
Kraków, 1992) Page 312
- [98] Pająk, Henryk : Zbrodnie UB-NKVD (Published by Author,
Lublin, 1991) Pp. 210/11
- [99] Ibid. Pp. 156/7

- [100] Kersten, Krystyna : The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland op cit. Page 137
- [101] PRO FO371/66150 N2650 Hankey file minute, March 1947.
- [102] Mikolajczyk, Stanislaw : The Pattern of Soviet Domination (Sampson, Low, Marston & Co. Ltd, London, 1948) Page 167
- [103] Ibid. Page 238
- [104] Ibid. Page 281
- [105] Pomian, John : Joseph Retinger : Memoirs of an Eminence Grise (Sussex University Press, 1972) Page 239
- [106] Lane, Arthur Bliss : I Saw Poland Betrayed op cit. Page 239
- [107] Ibid. Pp. 165/7
- [108] PRO FO371/66210 N8185 Hankey file minute dated 10th July, 1947.
- [109] PRO FO371/66210 N13205 Memo November, 1947.
- [110] PRO FO371/71541 N1519 John Russel to Hankey, 3rd February, 1948.
- [111] PRO FO371/71541 N9714 Sir Donald Gainer to FO.
- [112] PRO FO371/71541 N63 Sir Donald Gainer to FO, 29th December, 1947.
- [113] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds op cit. Page 82
- [114] Strzetelski, Stanislaw : Poland in the Year 1950 - Review of Events (National Committee for a Free Europe: Research and Information Center (Polish Section), New York, 1950) Page 48
- [115] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 41, C446 Mr McGovern, 12th February, 1947.
- [116] Jędrzejewicz, Wacław : Poland in the British Parliament op cit. Pp. 395/8
- [117] Hansard (Commons) Volume 413, C1109 Vice Admiral Taylor, 24th August, 1945.
- [118] Jędrzejewicz, Wacław : Poland in the British Parliament op cit. pp. 403/4

- [119] Hansard (Commons) Volume 408, Pl672 Division of the House, 1st March, 1945.
- [120] Hansard (Commons) Volume 408, Pl422 Amendment to the Yalta Declaration, 28th February, 1945.
- [121] Hansard (Commons) Volume 339, P28 Mr Gallacher during the Munich debate, 28th September, 1938.
- [122] Umiastowski, R. : Poland, Russia and Great Britain op cit. Page 461
- [123] Rupnik, Jacques : The Other Europe op cit. Page 63
- [124] Jędrzejewicz, Wacław : Poland in the British Parliament op cit. Page 500
- [125] Retinger, J.H. : All About Poland. Facts Figures Documents (Minerva Publishing Co. Ltd, London, 1940) Page 255
- [126] Kersten, Krystyna : The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland op cit. Page 113
- [127] Ascherson, Neal : The Struggles for Poland (Pan Books Ltd, London, 1988) Page 132
- [128] Lukas, Richard : Bitter Legacy op cit. Page 121
- [129] Ibid. Polish American Congress, 27th September, 1945. Page 120

CHAPTER 5

- [1] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Soldiers and Peasants op cit. Page 137
- [2] PRO FO371/56372 N3747 (See note for Chapter 2 [74])
- [3] PRO FO371/56376 N5207 Top Secret memo from British Embassy in Rome to FO, 20th April, 1946.
- [4] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Page 205
- [5] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 207
- [6] AAN 522/109 Undated/unsigned PUR memo from 1945.
- [7] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 193
- [8] Ibid. Page 67
- [9] Ibid. Page 55

- [10] Ibid. Kuropieska to Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
25th December, 1945 Page 122
- [11] Ibid. Page 155
- [12] Ibid. Pp. 198/9
- [13] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Page 64
- [14] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit.
Page 102
- [15] GSHI A.XII.66/20 Jan Kuźniarz to Deputy Chief of Staff.
- [16] Ibid. List from 7th January, 1946.
- [17] Weekly Hansard (Commons) Nol6, cl72. Written answer
by Mr Bellinger, 14th May, 1946.
- [18] GSHI A.XII.66/20 Copy of leaflet in the file.
- [19] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Pp. 158
- [20] Gondek, Leszek : Polskie Misje Wojskowe : 1945-1949
(Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1993)
Page 20
- [21] PRO FO371/56364 N895 Episode from January 1946.
- [22] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit.
Page 181
- [23] Pomian, John : Joseph Retinger op cit. Pp.199/200
- [24] Ibid.
- [25] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit.
Page 83
- [26] PRO FO371/56368 N2381 Draft FO letter to Admiralty,
8th March, 1946.
- [27] PRO FO371/56382 N6677 Hankey minute, 24th May, 1946.
- [28] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit.
Page 180
- [29] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Pp. 273/4
- [30] GSHI KGA28 (33) Speech by Marshal Żymierski, 12th
September, 1947.
- [31] PRO FO371/56392 N11822 Report from BBC Monitoring
for FO, 12th September, 1946..

- [32] PRO FO371/56394 N13209 General Macleod to Hankey,
30th September, 1946.
- [33] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Page 133
- [34] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Pp. 72/3
- [35] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Page 208
- [36] PRO FO371/56371 N3623 Cavendish-Bentinck to FO,
16th March, 1946.
- [37] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Soldiers and Peasants op cit. Page 131
- [38] AAN 522/155 Transcript made for PUR of undated radio
broadcast at Glaz Klagenfurt.
- [39] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. citing
Kuropieska's report to Warsaw Ministry of Foreign
Affairs, 2nd December, 1946. Page 142
- [40] PRO FO371/47684 N14126 Report of Warner's talks with
Retinger, 5th November, 1945.
- [41] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 69
- [42] GSHI KGA43 From an article in "Życie Warszawy",
6th October, 1945.
- [43] Ibid. From a report by Warsaw's ambassador to the USA,
August 1946.
- [44] AAN 418/22 "Osadnik na Ziemiach Odzyskanych" 25th August,
1948. Page 18
- [45] See Kryska-Karski, Tadeusz and Żurkowski, Stanisław :
Generałowie Polski Niepodległej (Editions Spotkania,
Warszawa, 1991)
- [46] Sosabowski, Gen. Stanisław : Droga Wiodła Ugorem op cit.
Page 183
- [47] See Kersten, Krystyna : The Establishment of Communist
Rule in Poland op cit.
- [48] Kochanowicz, Tadeusz : Na Wojennej Emigracji op cit.
Pp.285/6
- [49] Machalski, General Tadeusz : Co Widziałem... op cit.
Page 290
- [50] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 290

- [51] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit.
Page 195
- [52] Jerzy Potocki writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów op cit.
Page 232
- [53] AAN 284/283 Cutting from an unnamed newspaper, January 1946.
- [54] Wacławski, Mieczysław : Liberka (Published by author,
Poland, 1992) Page 252
- [55] AAN 522/122 Undated/unsigned memo from PUR
- [56] AAN 168/718 Report from Wojciech Albrycht, Director
of the Ministry of Information and Propaganda's
Foreign Dept, November 1945
- [57] AAN 522/343 Report, 31st March, 1946, to PUR from
Major Starzec, Chief of Polish Repatriation
Mission in 30 Corps Area
- [58] Ibid. Report, 13-31st March, 1946, from 30 Corps
Area to PUR.
- [59] Ibid. Report, 1-10th April, 1946, from 30 Corps
Area to PUR entitled "Rumours".
- [60] Ibid. Report, 1-15th March, 1946, from 30 Corps
Area to PUR.
- [61] Ibid. Report, 1-10th April, 1946, from 30 Corps
Area to PUR following Captain Kukla's recall
to Poland.
- [62] AAN 190/155 Head of Polish Mission, Bad Salzuflen,
to Jakub Prawin in Berlin, 3rd May, 1945.
- [63] Ibid. Minutes of the 5th May, 1947, meeting in Berlin.
- [64] Ibid. Acting Chief of Mission, Bad Salzuflen,
(unreadable signature) to Jakub Prawin, 3rd May,
1945.
- [65] Ibid. Captain Bojenko to PUR, 14th May, 1947.
- [66] PRO FO371/66162 N9867 General Ivor Thomas, War Office
Administrator Polish Forces, to Hankey. Undated,
September 1947.
- [67] AAN 190/155 Major Jankowski to PUR, 18th November, 1947.
- [68] PRO FO1049/338 Cavendish-Bentinck to Sir William
Strang, Political Advisor CCG (BE), 9th
April, 1946.

- [69] PRO FO371/56481 N3890 Cavendish-Bentinck to FO, 21st March, 1946.
- [70] PRO FO1049/339 13th December, 1946, letter from CCG (BE) to Cavendish-Bentinck.
- [71] PRO FO371/56481 N12298 Figures from Jakub Prawin's letter of 22nd August, 1946.
- [72] PRO FO1049/338 Cecil King to Hilary Young, 30th May, 1946.
- [73] PRO FO1052/257 Report by 13 Area Security Office, April 1946.
- [74] AAN 522/343 Report to PUR, 16-31st March, 1946.
- [75] AAN 522/160 Dr Przewanski to PUR, 23rd October, 1947.
- [76] PRO CAB 128/2 CM54(45) Cabinet minutes from meeting of 20th November, 1945.
- [77] AAN 522/162 Report from Colonel Chojecki, acting military attache in London, to O.II in Warsaw, April 1946.
- [78] Mrowiec, Alfons : Przez Monte Cassino op cit. Page 208
- [79] AAN 168/951 Report 8, January 20th, 1946, for Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
- [80] Ibid. Report 32, 25th March, 1946, for Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
- [81] Ibid. Report 35, 25th April, 1946, for Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
- [82] Ibid. Report 36, 6th May, 1946, for Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
- [83] Ibid. Report 39, 2nd June, 1946, for Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
- [84] AAN 522/405 Sałkowski to PUR, 30th March, 1946.
- [85] AAN 522/406 Wyszyński to Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18th March, 1946.
- [86] Ibid. Wyszyński to AFHQ, 15th March, 1946.
- [87] Ibid. Brigadier Napier (GHQ CMF) to Wyszyński, 23rd March, 1946.

- [88] Ibid. Wyszyński to PUR and Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 9th March, 1946.
- [89] Ibid. Sałkowski to PUR, 17th March, 1946.
- [90] AAN 522/405 Sałkowski to PUR, 18th April, 1946.
- [91] AAN 522/407 Sałkowski to PUR, 12th May, 1946.
- [92] AAN 522/405 Sałkowski to PUR, 19th September, 1946.
- [93] AAN 522/407 Sałkowski to PUR, 1st June, 1946.
- [94] Ibid. Sałkowski to PUR, 5th August, 1946, and Leon Szybek's response
- [95] AAN 522/408 Sałkowski to PUR, 28th September, 1946.
- [96] AAN 522/407 Sałkowski to PUR, 17th March, 1946.
- [97] AAN 522/406 Sałkowski to PUR, letter undated.
- [98] AAN 522/407 Sałkowski to PUR, 22nd March, 1946
- [99] Ibid. Secret letter from Sałkowski to Minister Wolski at PUR, 12th May, 1946.
- [100] AAN 522/406 Sałkowski to PUR, 24th March, 1946.
- [101] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 68
- [102] AAN 284/290 Report for 1946, undated and unsigned.
- [103] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Page 21
- [104] AAN 284/279 Kot to Red Cross in Warsaw, 6th February, 1946.
- [105] AAN 284/287 Bronisław Kostkiewicz to Max Huber, 23rd May, 1946 and Huber's answer of the 25th June, 1946.
- [106] Ibid. Polish Red Cross in Warsaw to UNRRA Council of Europe, London, 27th May, 1946.
- [107] AAN 284/279 Kot to Bronisław Kostkiewicz, 19th February, 1947.
- [108] Ibid. Red Cross in Warsaw to Kot, 20th March, 1947.
- [109] AAN 522/111 The Polish Red Cross responded to Leon Szybek's memo on the 16th November, 1946.

- [110] AAN 284/290 "Report for 1947" issued 31st March, 1948.
- [111] AAN 284/279 Każimiera Zawadska to Warsaw Red Cross, 15th December, 1947.
- [112] AAN 522/407 UNRRA in Warsaw to London, 3rd August, 1946. (Copies passed to Kot and Sałkowski)
- [113] AAN 522/155 Transcript of radio broadcast by PUR at Graz Klagenfurt, 24th May, 1946.
- [114] AAN 522/404 Dr Chromecki to PUR, 20th January, 1946.
- [115] AAN 522/47 M.Sapieha (PUR field officer) to Minister Wolski, 2nd July, 1945.
- [116] AAN 168/784 Kazimierz Nowak (Ministry of Information and Propaganda Head of Dept in Lower Silesia) to "Citizen Matuszewski", Warsaw, 25th July, 1945.
- [117] Żenczykowski, Tadeusz : Dramatyczny Rok 1945 (Polonia, London, 1982) Citing "Dziennik Polski", Kraków, 10th December, 1945. Page 169
- [118] AAN 168/766 Ministry of Information and Propaganda press review for Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs No.31, 13th July, 1946, citing "The New Statesman & Nation" - 22nd June, 1946. Pp.12/13
- [119] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 68
- [120] GSHI C129/II War diary of 10th Rifle Battn. Nowakowski arrived in Poland on the 15th December, 1945 - by March he was in Italy again with his unit.
- [121] "Karta" October 1993. Interview with Zygmunt Boger. Pp. 21/2
- [122] Czerkawski, Tadeusz : Byłem Żołnierzem... op cit. Page 355
- [123] "Karta" October 1993. Interview with Adolf Worzok. Pp. 24/5
- [124] Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej : Mała Encyklopedia Wojskowa Tom.2 (M.O.N., Warszawa, 1970) Page 334
- [125] Żymierski, Marszałek Michał & Spychalski, Generał Marian : Wojsko Polskie op cit. Page 101
- [126] Ibid. Page 117
- [127] Ibid. Page 127

[128] PRO FO371/47689 N16614 FO to Cavendish-Bentinck, 5th December, 1945.

[129] PRO FO371/56619 Frank Savery's report to W.D.Allen, 8th February, 1946.

CHAPTER 6

[1] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Soldiers and Peasants op cit. Churchill's address to the Polish Armed Forces during the Yalta debate in the Commons, 27th February, 1945. Page 126

[2] PRO FO371/56363 N647 Home Office draft Cabinet paper prior to FO correction, 10th January, 1946.

[3] PRO FO371/56627 N4190 Home Secretary to the Committee on Polish Questions, 27th March, 1946.

[4] PRO FO371/56514 N8599 Leaflet of unknown origin held in the file.

[5] PRO FO371/56514 N8442 Miss Herd to the FO, 24th June, 1946.

[6] PRO FO371/56507 N1636 F.Welton to Attlee, 28th January, 1946.

[7] PRO FO371/47674 N11073 Kircaldy branch of Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers to Attlee, 11th August, 1945.

[8] J. Gardener, Secretary General of the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers, at their conference, February 1947. Cited by Kenneth Lunn's article in "History Today", November 1985. : "Immigrants and British Labour's Response, 1870-1950". Page 51

[9] PRO FO371/56507 N2196 Letter dated February 1946 from T. Jones, a Preston businessman, to the FO.

[10] PRO FO371/56514 N8442 Hankey file minute dated 9th July, 1946.

[11] PRO FO371/56507 N1790 Letter from J. Bell to Bevin, 3rd February, 1946.

[12] PRO FO371/56469 N8864 Report from BBC Monitoring of Warsaw Radio. Transcript of Polish Trades Union's resolution to the World Federation of Trades Unions, 13th June, 1946.

[13] Nowakowski, Zygmunt : Na Przystanku op cit. Page 13

- [14] "The Economist" 25th May, 1946. Page 837
- [15] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 79, Cc 1332/3 Exchange held 19th February, 1948.
- [16] PRO AST18/6 Western Command Polish News Letter. No 19, October 1948.
- [17] PRO FO371/56523 N16085 Lennox-Boyd to Hector McNeil, Minister of State, 12th December, 1946. See Ministry of Labour's response at N16394 : Rosetti's letter to FO, 23rd December, 1946.
- [18] PRO FO371/66160 N6347 Letter in the "Dziennik Polski", 27th May, 1947, sent to the FO by Prof. Savory. FO translation.
- [19] Łęski, Wojciech writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów op cit. Pp 348/9
- [20] PRO FO371/56636 N15137 Cabinet Foreign Labour Committee, 25th November, 1946. FO summary of meeting.
- [21] Sword, Keith writing in Anna Bramwell's Refugees in the Age of Total War (Unwin Hyman Ltd, London, 1988) Page 235
- [22] Towpik-Szejnowska, T. Polski Korpus Przysposobienia i Rozmieszczenia w Wielkiej Brytanii (Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne Z.66, Kraków, 1980) Page 135
- [23] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 28, C930 Mr Shinwell to the Commons, 16th October, 1946.
- [24] Sword, Keith citing "The Times" leader of 2nd September, 1946, in Anna Bramwell's Refugees in the Age of Total War op cit. Page 239
- [25] PRO AST18/1 Pamphlet compiled by "The British Joint Committee for Polish Affairs". Copy held in the file.
- [26] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 75, Cc 191/2 Exchange in the Commons, 21st January, 1948.
- [27] PRO AST18/1 Cutting from "The Manchester Guardian", 4th February, 1947.
- [28] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 41, C 410 Michael Astor during the the PRC Bill's second reading, 12th February, 1947.
- [29] Ibid. C 423 Vice Admiral Taylor to the Commons.

- [30] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 109, C 12 Government answer to a written question. 25th November, 1948.
- [31] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 110, Cc 1021/2 Exchange in the Commons, 14th December, 1948.
- [32] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 41, C 398 Mrs Leah Manning, 12th February, 1947.
- [33] Zweig, Ferdynand writing in "Kultura" (Paris, March 1954, No 77) "Robotnik Polski w Anglii" Page 98
- [34] Stelmaszyński, Mieczysław in Jan Szatsznajder's Drogi do Polski op cit. Page 213
- [35] Zweig, Ferdynand in "Kultura" op cit. Page 103
- [36] Lipniacka, Ewa : The Xenophobes Guide to the Poles (Ravette Books, London, 1994) Page 13
- [37] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 112, C 736 Mr Beswick to the Commons. January 1949
- [38] Dzikiewicz, B. : Z Teodolitem Pod Monte Cassino op cit. Page 213
- [39] Ibid. Pp 217/8
- [40] Potocki, Jerzy writing in Pamiętniki Emigrantów op cit. Page 223
- [41] Slepokora cited in Berbryusz, Ewa : Anders Spieszony op cit. Page 118
- [42] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 26, C 783 30th July, 1946.
- [43] PRO FO371/56388 N9040 Internal minutes regarding a report from the Scottish Office, 15th July, 1946.
- [44] "West Sussex County Times" 1st October, 1948. Page 2
- [45] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 29, C 1472 Oral answer from Colonel Gomme-Duncan, 22nd October, 1946.
- [46] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 110
- [47] PRO FO371/56521 N13614 Report from War Office for FO, November 1946.
- [48] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja w Londynie op cit. Page 105
- [49] PRO FO371/56521 N13712 Hankey file minute, 24th October, 1946.

- [50] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Page 27
Citing General Anders' order to all COs, 23rd November, 1945.
- [51] Wacławski, Mieczysław : Liberka op cit. Page 227
- [52] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Pp 151-183
- [53] GSHI A.XII.66/20 Report from OC 2 Polcorps Military Police, Colonel Skoczen, to 2 Polcorps Chief of Staff, 17th September, 1946. The report contains 17 serious incidents from 1st January, 1945 to September 1946.
- [54] PRO FO371/56383 N7073 Hankey to War Office, 29th May, 1946.
- [55] PRO FO371/47676 N11524 Mrs Kathleen Chapman to Bevin, 21st August, 1945.
- [56] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 41, Cc 420/1 Exchange in the Commons during the debate on the PRC Bill's second reading, 12th February, 1947.
- [57] PRO FO371/47675 N11133 Mrs Eileen Short (who had spent the war in Poland) to the FO, 21st August, 1945.
- [58] PRO WO204/711 (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [59] Bullock, Alan : Ernest Bevin : Foreign Secretary (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985) Resolution put forward by the Hendon Branch at the Labour Party conference, 1946. Page 276
- [60] Umiastowski, R. : Poland, Russia and Great Britain op cit. citing George Orwell writing in "Tribune", 1st September, 1944. Page 298
- [61] Hugh Trevor-Roper writing the introduction to Nicholas Bethell's The Last Secret op cit. Page IX
- [62] Hammerton, Sir John : The Second Great War : A Standard History Volume 4 (The Waverly Book Company, London. There is no publication date as the work was published as a contemporaneous part-work through the war) Page 1506
- [63] Modelski, Tadeusz : The Polish Contribution to the Ultimate Allied Victory in the Second World War op cit. Page 169
- [64] PRO FO371/56519 N11708 Waterfield's file minute, 20th September, 1946.

- [65] GSHI A.XII.1/83 Letter to the editor of the "News Chronicle" 6th March, 1947, asking if the reporting of Chuter Ede's speech was fair?
- [66] PRO FO371/47801 N6887 The file contains material relating to the "Polish Dachau" issue, particularly various press reports and cuttings from June 1945.
- [67] PRO FO371/47734 N7822 The story broke 30th June, 1945, after a Reuters release. See N16482 for official British disquiet over the Soviet version of the Katyn story.
- [68] Umiastowski, R. : Poland, Russia and Great Britain op cit. Citing Douglas Reed's article in "Time and Tide", 15th January, 1943. Page 159
- [69] FO800/490 O. G. Sargent's report on British press coverage of events in Poland, 21st October, 1946.
- [70] PRO FO371/56441 N7963 Hankey's report of 19th June, 1946 to Cavendish-Bentinck in Warsaw.
- [71] "The Times" 1st July, 1946. Page 4
- [72] PRO FO371/47673 N10586 Cutting from "The Times", 4th August, 1945, held in the file.
- [73] Charlton, Michael : The Eagle and the Small Birds op cit. Pp 50/1
- [74] Coates, W.P. & Z.K. : Six Centuries of Russo-Polish Relations op cit. Preface Pp VI/VII
- [75] PRO WO204/732 (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [76] "The Economist" 19th February, 1949. Page 325
- [77] "The Economist" 29th May, 1948. Page 878
- [78] PRO FO371/47603 N9544 File cutting of "The Daily Telegraph", 25th July, 1945.
- [79] PRO FO371/56658 June 1946. Copy of welcome card held in file.
- [80] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Polish Immigrants in Britain op cit. Page 101
- [81] Bullock, Alan : The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin (Volume 2) (William Heinemann Ltd, London, 1967) Bevin at the Labour Party conference, Blackpool, December 1944. Page 384

- [82] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No 41, C 439 Mr Gallacher to the Commons during the debate on the PRC Bill's second reading, 12th February, 1947.
- [83] Anderson, H.Foster : What I Saw in Poland op cit. Page 97
- [84] PRO FO371/56386 N8059 Summary of an article in the "Dziennik Polski", 18th June, 1946. FO translation.

CHAPTER 7

- [1] Zaroń, Zbigniew : Wojenne Losy Ludnosci Polskiej Na Obczyźnie (Unicorn Publishing, London/Warszawa, 1994) Pp 33/5
- [2] PRO FO371/47660 N428 Ward's minute of 1st February, 1945, regarding SHAEF increase in Polish forces in 21st Army Group.
- [3] PRO FO371/56637 N15766 Hancock's minute 12th October, 1946. The Germany date was approved by the 7th meeting of the Polish Forces Official Committee, 13th December, 1946. France was made an exception as there were some 800 Poles who had joined after that date. (See FO371/71566 N1131)
- [4] PRO FO371/47684 N14182 Letter from FO to WO, 27th October, 1945.
- [5] PRO FO371/66162 N11898 see also N9867 for provisions made for members of the AK.
- [6] AAN 190/150 Undated/unsigned PUR report.
- [7] Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych - Biuro 'C' : Informator o Nielegalnych Antypaństwowych Organizacjach... op cit. Page 71
- [8] Foot, M.R.D. : SOE op cit. Page 109 Citing Pierre Loraine's "Secret Warfare" (Orbis, London, 1984)
- [9] PRO FO371/47711 N14073 AFHQ to FO, 16th October, 1945. The telegram No. 1866 mentioned is in file N13836 although it has not been released to the public.
- [10] PRO FO371/66149 N11067 From the BBC "Summary of World Broadcasts", 10th September, 1947. Most of the material in this file remains classified and has been withheld by the Foreign Office.
- [11] Linowski, Jan : Trudne Powroty op cit. Page 136 (See PRO FO371/56637 N15912 for plans of MI5 infiltration)

- [12] WO32/12262 Colonel Balfour (WO) to Crawford (Control Office for Germany/Austria) 3rd January, 1947.
- [13] PRO FO371/56398 N14992 Report from November 1946.
- [14] PRO FO371/56629 N6703 Inter-departmental correspondence between FO, WO, the Home Office and the Treasury. June 1946.
- [15] Kuropieska, Józef : Misja W Londynie op cit. Page 218
- [16] PRO FO371/56630 N8387 Frank Savery to Hankey, 25th June, 1946.
- [17] Szatsznajder, Jan : Drogi Do Polski op cit. Page 213
- [18] PRO FO371/56632 N10309 Undated Hankey minute from August 1946.
- [19] PRO FO371/56629 N6702 Hankey minute prior to meeting with the Polish generals to be held 21st May, 1946.
- [20] Sidor, Kazimierz : W Niewoli u Andersa op cit. Page 208
- [21] PRO FO371/56634 N12542 Political Advisor to SAC CMF in a letter to Hankey, 6th September, 1946.
- [22] PRO FO371/56631 N10256 Brief for the Minister of State (Noel-Baker) for the Polish Forces Committee to be held 1st August, 1946.
- [23] PRO FO371/56391 N11282 Brigadier Pyeman writing to Hankey, 2nd September, 1946.
- [24] See note [22] above.
- [25] PRO FO371/56631 N10257 Minutes of the Polish Forces Committee meeting held 1st August, 1946.
- [26] AAN 522/479 Secret letter from Colonel Komar (Head of Warsaw's O.II) to Minister Olszewski at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 26th July, 1946.
- [27] Kopański, Stanisław : Wspomnienia Wojenne, 1939-1946 (Veritas, London, 1961) Polish Government view of PRC, 3rd September, 1946. Page 377
- [28] PRO HO213/1206 Fitzgeorge-Balfour's paper for the Chairman of the sub-committee, Polish Forces Official Committee, July 1947.
- [29] Kuropieska, Józef : Z Powrotem w Służbie op cit. Page 189

- [30] Tannahill, J.A. : European Volunteer Workers in Britain
(Manchester University Press, 1958) Page 26
- [31] AAN 522/159 undated PUR report on DPs in Germany:
1st January, 1946-November 1946.
- [32] PRO FO371/66709 WR398 Report from UNRRA, September
1946, on refugees seeking assistance. The FO
considered the figures suspect as they were
based on **declared** nationality.
- [33] AAN 190/150 Head of Consular Section, Polish Military
Mission, Berlin to Warsaw Ministry of Foreign
Affairs. (Undated but after August 1948)
- [34] AAN 190/150 Top secret report from Jerzy Krzeczowski,
Polish Consul in Rastatt and Baden, to the Consul
General in Berlin, Dr Jacek Marecki, 24th August,
1948.
- [35] Boshyk, Yury : Ukraine During World War II. History and
Aftermath (Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies,
University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1986.) Report of
the Repatriation poll of Displaced Persons in UNRRA
assembly centres in Germany for the period 1-14 May,
1946: "Analysis of negative votes". Page 231
- [36] Lukas, Richard : Bitter Legacy op cit. Page 111
- [37] Boshyk, Yury : Ukraine During World War II op cit.
Report of the Executive Staff of UNRRA, US Zone
Headquarters, to the UNRRA Director General,
September 1946 : "Confidential Report on the
General Situation of DPs". Page 226
- [38] Lukas, Richard : Bitter Legacy op cit. Page 112
- [39] Boshyk, Yury : Ukraine During World War II op cit.
(See note [37] above) Page 229
- [40] AAN 522/408 Uncredited PUR report, 20th September, 1946.
- [41] PRO FO371/56605 N1383 Cavendish-Bentinck's report to
FO, 30th January, 1946, citing "Zycie Warszawy"
of the 29th.
- [42] PRO WO204/711 (See note for Chapter 2 [31])
- [43] PRO FO1049/622 CCG (BE), Political Division. Report on
British Policy to DPs in Germany in 43 and 51
Divisional areas, January 1946.
- [44] PRO FO1049/622 Leaflet hung in Fallingbostel DP Camp,
end of April 1946.

- [45] AAN 522/343 Report from Dr Adam Nasielski and Dr Henryk Piernikarz to PUR - "Polish criminals in Germany : November 1945-March 1946".
- [46] PRO FO1049/200 See also AAN 168/796 for Warsaw's Ministry of Information and Propaganda protests both official and unofficial.
- [47] PRO FO1049/623 Sir Arthur Street, Permanent Secretary, Control Office for Germany and Austria, London, to General Sir Brian Robertson, Deputy Military Governor, 11th March, 1946.
- [48] Tannahill, J.A. : European Volunteer Workers in Britain op cit. Page 30
- [49] PRO FO945/470 From the British Consulate, Baden-Baden, to the Refugee Dept, FO, 27th March, 1947.
- [50] PRO FO371/66710 WR1161 Waterfield's memo of 8th April, 1947 and Hankey's of the 10th.
- [51] PRO FO371/71663 N7688 C.R.A. Rae, file minute, 6th July, 1948.
- [52] PRO FO371/66714 WR3776 Boothby to Rouse at the Ministry of Labour, 2nd January, 1948.
- [53] PRO FO371/66714 WR3476 October 1947. File contains Zarine's explanation of the SS tattoos dated the 22nd, and Boothby and Brimelow's minutes of the 28th and 29th respectively.
- [54] PRO FO371/72039 WR1052 Wilkinson minute of 12th March, 1948.
- [55] PRO FO371/56561 N4916 From a draft report by Committee on Preparations for the Meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers. Report title: "The Problem of the Disposal of the Polish Armed Forces" 8th April, 1946. C.G. Eastwood (Secretary).
- [56] PRO FO371/56637 N15893 Hankey minute 11th December, 1946.
- [57] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No. 44, C 372 Exchange in the Commons during the debate on the PRC Bill's third reading, 4th March, 1947.
- [58] PRO FO371/56570 N13165 Waterfield file minute, 17th October, 1946.
- [59] Tabori, Paul : The Anatomy of Exile op cit. Page 214
- [60] PRO FO371/56561 N4220 Minute from March 1946.

- [61] PRO FO371/56562 N5408 Report of Under-secretary of State, Hector McNeil, 23 April, 1946.
- [62] PRO FO371/56562 N5386 Report from April 1946 regarding Argentina and Uruguay.
- [63] PRO FO371/56562 N5124 Paid advert in "Dziennik Polski", 6th April, 1946, by Labour Section of the Welfare Dept - Interim Treasury Committee for Polish Questions. Hankey's response to the Warsaw Poles' protest is dated 23rd April, 1946.
- [64] AAN 522/479 Letter from Polish (Warsaw) Chargé d'Affaires, Janusz Makarczyk, to Jozef Olszewski, Director of Political Dept, Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28th February, 1946.
- [65] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Polish Immigrants in Britain op cit. Page 67
- [66] Zbyszewski, Karol : Polacy w Anglii op cit. Page 12
- [67] PRO FO371/66161 N6899 Polish Officers, 50 years and over, June 1947.
- [68] PRO FO371/56390 N10592 AFHQ to WO, 29th July, 1946.
- [69] PRO AST18/96 Summary of report from East Africa. Dr Boucher to National Assistance Board and Ministry of Health, 31st May, 1950.
- [70] PRO FO371/56634 N12685 Cabinet Polish Forces Committee, 1st August, 1946.
- [71] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No. 41, C 404 Mr Lipson citing WO Order 2nd February, 1947, during the debate on the PRC Bill's second reading, 12th February, 1947.
- [72] PRO WO32/12262 (Document 179B) Report from March 1947.
- [73] PRO FO371/66184 N5813 Hankey minute of 19th May, 1947.
- [74] Ibid. N7042 Hankey minute of 17th May, 1947.
- [75] Ibid. N6908 Sir Donald Gainer reporting a protest from Warsaw Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 1947.
- [76] PRO FO371/66160 N4151 Roper of the FO to Major Roberts at the WO, 14th April, 1947.

[77] Weekly Hansard (Commons) No. 113, C 1628 Michael Stewart,
Under-secretary of State for War, during the debate
wind-down of the PRC, 1st February, 1949.

[78] Zubrzycki, Jerzy : Polish Immigrants in Britain op cit.
Page 58

[79] Ibid. Page 62

[80] Ibid. Page 70

CONCLUSION

[1] Keegan, John : Six Armies in Normandy op cit. Page 270

APPENDIX D

[1] Young DSO MC MA, Brigadier Peter (Editor) : World War II
(Osprey Publishing Ltd, London, 1978) Vol. 8 Page 2023
From the German magazine "Simplicissimus"

[2] Wańkowicz, Melchior : Bitwa O Monte Cassino (M.O.N.,
Warszawa, 1989) Vol. 1 Page 119

[3] Ibid.

APPENDIX H

[1] "The War Illustrated : Complete Record of the Conflict
by Land and Sea and in the Air" Edited by Sir John
Hammerton. (The Amalgamated Press Ltd, London)
Page 543

[2] Ibid. Page 128

[3] Ibid. Page 543

APPENDIX I

[1] Young DSO MC MA, Brigadier Peter : World War II op cit.
Vol. 6 Page 1615

[2] "The Second Great War : A Standard History" Edited by
Sir John Hammerton (The Waverly Book Company Ltd.,
London) Vol. 8 Page 3407

[3] Ibid. Vol. 5 Page 1810

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anders, Władysław AN ARMY IN EXILE Macmillan, London, 1949
- Anders, Władysław BEZ OSTATNIEGO ROZDZIAŁU: WSPOMNIEN Z LAT 1939-1946 Montgomery Printing Co. Ltd, Newtown, Wales, 1949
- Anderson, H.Foster WHAT I SAW IN POLAND - 1946 The Windsor Press, Slough, 1946
- Ascherson, Neal THE STRUGLES FOR POLAND Pan Books Ltd, London, 1988
- Barbarski, Krzysztof POLISH ARMOUR, 1939-45 Osprey Publishing Ltd, London, 1982
- Berberyusz, Ewa ANDERS SPIESZONY Aneks Publishers, London, 1992
- Berhin, I.B. ISTORIYA SSSR - SOVYETSKII PERIYOD Vishaya Shkola, Moskva, 1987
- Bethell, Nicholas GOMUŁKA, HIS POLAND AND HIS COMMUNISM Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd, London, 1969
- Bethell, Nicholas THE LAST SECRET : FORCIBLE REPATRIATION TO RUSSIA 1944-7 André Deutsch, London, 1974
- Biegański, Witold POLSKIE SIŁY ZBROJNE NA ZACHODZIE 1939-1945 Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, Warszawa, 1990
- Biegański, Witold (editor, et al.) POLSKI CZYN ZBROJNY W II WOJNIE ŚWIATOWEJ : WALKI FORMACJI POLSKICH NA ZACHODZIE 1939-1945 Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1981
- Boshyk, Yury UKRAINE DURING WORLD WAR II. HISTORY AND ITS AFTERMATH Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1986
- Bramwell, Anna REFUGEES IN THE AGE OF TOTAL WAR Unwin Hyman Ltd, London, 1988.
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew THE SOVIET BLOC - UNITY & CONFLICT Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1967

- Bullock, Alan THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ERNEST BEVIN
(Volume 2) William Heinemann Ltd,
London, 1967
- Bullock, Alan ERNEST BEVIN : FOREIGN SECRETARY
Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985
- Caban, Ireneusz POLACY INTERNOWANI W ZSRR W LATACH
1944-1947 Wydawnictwo Lubelskie,
Lublin, 1990
- Calvocoressi, Peter TOP SECRET ULTRA Sphere Books Ltd,
London, 1981
- Carrer, Jean ACROSS THE CONTINENTS... IN SEARCH
OF JUSTICE Polish Home Army Veterans
Circle, Chicago, Ill., 1970
- Carrere D'Encausse, Helene BIG BROTHER. THE SOVIET UNION
AND SOVIET EUROPE Holmes & Meier
Publishers, New York/London, 1987
- Cesarani, David JUSTICE DELAYED : HOW BRITAIN BECAME A
REFUGE FOR NAZI WAR CRIMINALS Mandarin
Paperbacks, London. 1992
- Charlton, Michael THE EAGLE AND THE SMALL BIRDS. CRISIS IN
THE SOVIET EMPIRE FROM YALTA TO SOLIDARITY
BBC Books, London, 1984
- Churchill, Winston THE SECOND WORLD WAR : VOLUME 5, CLOSING
THE RING Penguin Books, London, 1988
- Churchill, Winston THE SECOND WORLD WAR : VOLUME 6, TRIUMPH
AND TRAGEDY Penguin Books, London, 1988
- Ciechanowski, Jan DEFEAT IN VICTORY Victor Gollancz Ltd,
London. 1948
- Coates, W.P. & Z.K. SIX CENTURIES OF RUSSO-POLISH RELATIONS
Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1948
- Cole, G.D.H. THE INTELLIGENT MAN'S GUIDE TO THE POST-
WAR WORLD Victor Gollancz Ltd, London,
1947
- Czajkowski, B. & Sulik, B. POLACY W W.BRYTANII Instytut Literacki,
Paryż, 1961
- Czerkowski, Tadeusz BYŁEM ŻOŁNIERZEM GENERAŁA ANDERSA
Pax, Warszawa, 1991
- Dąbrowski, Roman DLACZEGO NIE WRACAMY K.Breiter & Co.
Rome/London/New York, 1946

- Davies, Norman HEART OF EUROPE : A SHORT HISTORY OF POLAND Oxford University Press, Oxford/ New York, 1986
- Deborin, Grigory THIRTY YEARS OF VICTORY Progress Publishers Moscow, 1975
- Dmitrów, Edmund BILANS OTWARCIA R.T.W., Warszawa, 1992
- Durand, Arthur A. STALAG LUFT III - THE SECRET STORY Patrick Stephens Ltd, Wellingborough, 1989
- Dzikiewicz, B. Z TEODOLITEM POD MONTE CASSINO Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1984
- Eade, Charles THE WAR SPEECHES OF THE RT. HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL (Volume 3) Cassel & Co., London, 1952
- Elliot, Mark PAWNS OF YALTA : SOVIET REFUGEES AND AMERICA'S ROLE IN THEIR REPATRIATION University of Illinois Press, 1981
- Ellis, John CASSINO - A HOLLOW VICTORY. THE BATTLE FOR ROME. JANUARY - JUNE 1944 André Deutsch Ltd, London, 1984
- Filipow, Krzysztof & Wawer, Zbigniew PRZECHODNIU POWIEDZ POLSCE... NARVIK, TOBRUK, MONTE CASSINO, FALAISE Arkady, Warszawa, 1989
- Foot, M.R.D. SOE - AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE, 1940-46 BBC Books, London, 1984
- Garliński, Józef POLAND IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1987
- General Sikorski Historical Institute DOCUMENTS ON POLISH-SOVIET RELATIONS 1939-1945 (Volume II. 1943-1945) Heinemann, London, 1967
- Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich W Polsce, Rada Ochrony Pomników Walki i Męczeństwa OBOZY HITLEROWSKIE NA ZIEMIACH POLSKICH 1939-1945 - INFORMATOR ENCYKLOPEDYCZNY Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa, 1979
- Gondek, Leszek POLSKIE MISJE WOJSKOWE : 1945-1949 Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1981

- Grzelak, Czesław
Stańczyk, Henryk &
Zwoliński, Stefan BEZ MOŻLIWOŚCI WYBORU. WOJSKO POLSKIE
NA FRONCIE WSCHODNIM Bellona, Warszawa,
1993
- Habielski, R. NIEZŁOMNI NIEPRZEJEDNANI : EMIGRACYJNE
"WIADOMOŚCI" I ICH KRĄG 1940-1981
Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Warszawa,
1991
- Heller, Joseph CATCH - 22 Corgi Books, London, 1970
- Hemar, Marian LYRYKI - SATYRY - FRASKI Polska Fundacja
Kulturalna, Londyn, 1988
- Hills, Denis RETURN TO POLAND The Bodley Head Ltd,
London, 1988
- Hills, Denis TYRANTS AND MOUNTAINS - A RECKLESS LIFE
John Murray Ltd, London, 1992
- Hotchkiss, Christine HOME TO POLAND Farrar, Straus & Cudahy,
New York, 1988
- Jędrzejewicz, Wacław POLAND IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT 1939-
1945 Józef Piłsudski Institute of
America for Research in the Modern
History of Poland, Inc., New York, 1962
- Jurgielewicz, Wacław ORGANIZACJA LUDOWEGO WOJSKA POLSKIEGO
(22.VII.1944 - 9.V.1945 Ministerstwo
Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1968
- Karczewski, M.
(editor) POLSCY SPADOCHRONIARZE - PAMIĘTNIK
ŻOŁNIERZY Montgomeryshire Printing Co.,
Newtown, Wales, 1949
- Keegan, John SIX ARMIES IN NORMANDY Penguin Books
Ltd, Harmondsworth, 1983
- Kersten, Krystyna THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNIST RULE IN
POLAND 1943-1948 University of California,
Berkeley, Calif., 1991
- Kochanowicz, Tadeusz NA WOJENNEJ EMIGRACJI Książka i Wiedza,
Warszawa, 1979
- Komisja Historyczna Polskiego Sztabu Głównego w Londynie
POLSKIE SIŁY ZBROJNE W DRUGIEJ WOJNIE
ŚWIATOWEJ : TOM II, KAMPANIE NA OBCZYŻNIE
- CZĘŚĆ 2 Instytut Polski i Muzeum
im. Gen. Sikorskiego. Londyn, 1975

- Komornicki, Stanisław WOJSKO POLSKIE 1939-1945 : BARWA I BRON
(editor, et al.) Interpress, Warszawa, 1984
- Komisja Współpracy z Poloniami w Innych Krajach DZIEŚIEĆ
LAT WALKI I KRZYWDY Kongresu Polonii
Amerykańskiej, 1949
- Kopański, Stanisław WSPOMNIENIA WOJENNE, 1939-1946 Veritas,
London, 1961
- Korbonski, Stefan WARSAW IN CHAINS George Allen & Unwin
Ltd, London, 1959
- Korn, Krzysztof Z PIOSENKĄ W PLECAKU Published by
Author, Kraków, 1992
- Koźniewski, Kazimierz PAMIĘTNIKI EMIGRANTÓW 1878-1958
(editor) Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1979
- Kryśka-Karski, Tadeusz GENERACJOWIE POLSKI NIEPODLEGŁEJ
& Żurkowski Stanisław Editions Spotkania, Warszawa, 1991
- Kulischer, Eugene M. EUROPE ON THE MOVE. WAR AND POPULATION
CHANGES 1917-47 Columbia University
Press, New York, 1948
- Kuropieska, Józef MISJA W LONDYNIE Czytelnik, Warszawa,
1981
- Kuropieska, Józef Z POWROTEM W SZUŻBIE Krajowa Agencja
Wydawnicza, Kraków, 1984
- Lane, Arthur Bliss I SAW POLAND BETRAYED Western Islands,
Belmont, Mass., 1965
- Linowski, Jan TRUDNE POWROTY - LOSY ŻOŁNIERZY POLSKICH
NA ZACHODZIE 1945-1949 Ministerstwo
Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1987
- Lipniacka, Ewa THE XENOPHOBES' GUIDE TO THE POLES
Ravette Books, London, 1994
- Lubomirski, Eugeniusz KARTKI Z MEGO ŻYCIA Polska Fundacja
Kulturalna, London, 1982
- Lukas, Richard BITTER LEGACY : POLISH-AMERICAN
RELATIONS IN THE WAKE OF WORLD WAR II
Kentucky University Press, Lexington,
Ken., 1982
- Lukas Richard THE STRANGE ALLIES : THE UNITED STATES
AND POLAND, 1941-1945 University of
Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tenn., 1978

- Machalski, General Tadeusz CO WIDZIAŁEM I PRZEŻYŁEM Veritas Foundation Publication Centre, London, 1980
- Mackiewicz, Stanisław CO TERAZ ROBIĆ? Williams, Lea & Co., London, October 1945
- Mackiewicz, Stanisław WRACAĆ CZY NIE WRACAĆ Williams, Lea & Co., London, August 1945
- Maczek, Stanisław OD PODWODY DO CZOŁGA : WSPOMNIENIA WOJENNE 1918-1945 Ossolineum, Wrocław, 1990
- Marat, Stanisław & Snopkiewicz, Jacek ZBRODNIA - SPRAWA GENERAŁA FIELDORFA-NILA Alfa, Warszawa, 1989
- Marrus, Michael R. THE UNWANTED : EUROPEAN REFUGEES IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY Oxford University Press, Oxford/New York, 1985
- Mikołajczyk, Stanisław THE PATTERN OF SOVIET DOMINATION Sampson, Low, Marston & Co. Ltd, London, 1948
- Mikołajczyk, Stanisław THE RAPE OF POLAND - PATTERN OF SOVIET AGGRESSION Greenwood Press Publishers, Westport, Connecticut, 1973
- Milligan, Spike Rommel "Gunner Who?" Penguin Books, London, 1976
- Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej MAŁA ENCYKLOPEDIA WOJSKOWA M.O.N., Warszawa, 1970
- Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych - Biuro 'C' INFORMATOR O NIELEGALNYCH ANTYPANSTWOWYCH ORGANIZACJACH I BANDACH ZBROJNYCH DZIAŁAJĄCYCH W POLSCE LUDOWEJ W LATACH 1944-1956 Retro, Lublin, 1993 (Published originally by M.S.W., Warszawa, 1964)
- Modelski, Tadeusz THE POLISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE ULTIMATE ALLIED VICTORY IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR Published by Author, Worthing, 1988
- Modelski, Tadeusz SUFFERERS FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY Published by Author, Worthing, 1990
- Mrowiec, Alfons PRZEZ MONTE CASSINO 1944-1946 Śląsk, Katowice, 1959

- Nowakowski, Zygmunt NA PRZYSTANKU - LIST DO NIEZNANEGO PRZYJACIELA PŁYNĄCEGO DO ANGLII
Williams, Lea & CO., London, 1946
- Newman, Bernard RUSSIA'S NEIGHBOUR - THE NEW POLAND
Victor Gollancz Ltd, London, 1946
- NiD CZY WRACAĆ - NIEPODLEGŁOŚĆ I DEMOCRACJA
Published by NiD. London, 1945
- O.W. DZIESIECIOLECIE POLSKICH ODDZIAŁÓW WARTOWNICZYCH PRZY ARMII AMERYKAŃSKIEJ W EUROPIE 1945-1955 Fundusz Społeczny
Oddziałów Wartowniczych, Mannheim, 1955
- Paff, Lucjan KRESOWA WALCZY W ITALII Referat Kultury i Prasy Kresowej Dywizji Piechoty, Italia, 1945
- Pajak, Henryk ZBRODNIE UB-NKVD Published by Author, Lublin, 1991
- Pancewicz, mgr inż. B.M. HARCERSTWO W AFRYCE 1941-1949
Harcerska Komisja Historyczna, Londyn, 1985
- Piesakowski, Tomasz THE FATE OF THE POLES IN THE USSR 1939-1989 Gryf Publications Ltd, London, 1990
- Podoski, Jan ZBYT CIEKAWY CZASY Wydawnictwo Komunikacji i Łączności, Warszawa, 1991
- Pomian, John JOSEPH RETINGER : MEMOIRS OF AN EMINENCE
GRISE Sussex University Press, 1972
- Popiel, Karol NA MOGIŁACH PRZYJACIÓŁ Odnova, London, 1966
- Raczynski, Count Edward IN ALLIED LONDON Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1962
- Rawski, Tadeusz
Stapor, Zdzisław
& Zamojski, Jan WOJNA WYZWOLEŃCZA NARODU POLSKIEGO W LATACH 1939-1945 Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1966
- Retinger, J.H. ALL ABOUT POLAND. FACTS FIGURES DOCUMENTS Minerva Publishing Co. Ltd, London, 1940
- Rosignoli, Guido THE ALLIED FORCES IN ITALY 1943-45
David & Charles Publishers PLC., Newton Abbot, 1989

- Rudnicki DSO, K.S. THE LAST OF THE WAR HORSES Backman & Turner, London, 1974
- Rupnik, Jacques THE OTHER EUROPE George Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, London, 1988
- Rutkowski, Stanisław WYCHOWANIE ŻOŁNIERZY W POLSKICH BURŻUAZYJNYCH FORMACJACH WOJSKOWYCH PODCZAS II WOJNY ŚWIATOWEJ (1939-1945) Wojskowa Akademia Polityczna im. F. Dzierżyńskiego, Warszawa, 1967
- Sidor, Kazimierz W NIEWOLI U ANDERSA Arti Graf Onorati, Rzym, 1947
- Sosabowski, Gen. Stanisław DROGA WIODŁA UGOREM Veritas, London, 1967
- S.P.K. O PRAWDE I SPRAWIEDLIWOŚĆ - POMNIK KATYŃSKI W LONDYNIE SPK-Gryf Publications Ltd, London, 1977
- Staar, Richard F. POLAND 1944-1962 : THE SOVIETIZATION OF A CAPTIVE PEOPLE Louisiana State University Press, 1962
- Strzetelski, Stanisław POLAND IN THE YEAR 1950 - REVIEW OF EVENTS National Committee for a Free Europe: Research and Information Center (Polish Section), New York, 1950
- S.P.P. ARMIA KRAJOWA W DOKUMENTACH 1944-1945 Tom V (Październik 1944 - Lipiec 1945) Studium Polski Podziemnej, Londyn, 1981
- Sword, Keith
Davies, Norman &
Ciechanowski, Jan THE FORMATION OF THE POLISH COMMUNITY IN GREAT BRITAIN School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1989
- Syrop, Konrad POLAND : BETWEEN THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL Robert Hale, London, 1968
- Szaflik, Jozef R. HISTORIA POLSKI 1939-1947 Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa, 1979
- Szatsznajder, Jan DROGI DO POLSKI Presstrust, Wrocław, 1991
- Szmagier, Krzysztof GENERAŁ ANDERS I JEGO ŻOŁNIERZE Pax, Warszawa, 1993
- Tabori, Paul THE ANATOMY OF EXILE : A SEMANTIC AND HISTORICAL STUDY G.G. Harrap & Co. Ltd, London, 1972

- Tannahill, J.A. EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER WORKERS IN BRITAIN Manchester University Press, 1958
- Thielmann, Edmund ŻOŁNIERSKA ODYSEJA Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1971
- Tolstoy, Nikolai VICTIMS OF YALTA Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, London, 1977
- Topolski, Jerzy HISTORIA POLSKI - OD CZASÓW NAJDAWNIEJSZYCH DO 1990 ROKU Polczek, Warszawa/Kraków, 1992
- Towpik-Szejnowska, T. POLSKI KORPUS PRZYSPOSOBIENIA I ROZMIESZCZENIA W WIELKIEJ BRITANII Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne Z.66, Kraków, 1980
- Umiastowski, R. POLAND, RUSSIA AND GREAT BRITAIN, 1941-1945. A STUDY OF EVIDENCE Hollis & Carter, London, 1946
- Wacławski, Mieczysław LIBERKA Published by Author, Poland, 1992
- Wańkowicz, Melchior BITWA O MONTE CASSINO Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, 1989 (Originally by "Oddz. Kultury i Prasy 2 Polskiego Korpusu", Rzym, 1947)
- Wiatr, Jerzy Z. THE SOLDIER AND THE NATION. THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN POLISH POLITICS, 1918-1985 Westview Press, Boulder/London, 1988
- Young DSO MC MA, Brigadier Peter (editor) WORLD WAR II Osprey Publishing Ltd., London. 1978. 10 volumes published in weekly parts.
- Zaloga, Steven J. THE POLISH ARMY 1939-1945 Osprey Publishing Ltd, London, 1982
- Żaroń, Zbigniew WOJENNE LOSY LUDNOŚCI POLSKIEJ NA OBCZYŻNIE W LATACH 1939-1947 Unicorn Publishing, London/Warszawa, 1994
- Zbyszewski, Karol POLACY W ANGLII Nakładem Biblioteki Polskiej w W.Brytanii, Londyn, 1947
- Żenczykowski, Tadeusz DRAMATYCZNY ROK 1945 Polonia, London, 1982
- Żochowski, Stanisław BRYTYJSKA POLITYKA WOBEC POLSKI 1916-1948 Published by Author, Brisbane/London, 1979

Zochowski, Stanisław O NARODOWYCH SIŁACH ZBROJNYCH - NSZ
Retro, Lublin, 1994

Zubrzycki, Jerzy POLISH IMMIGRANTS IN BRITAIN - A STUDY
OF ADJUSTMENT Martinus Nijhoff, The
Hague, 1956

Zubrzycki, Jerzy SOLDIERS AND PEASANTS : THE SOCIOLOGY OF
POLISH MIGRATION Orbis Books Ltd, London,
1988

Zyblikiewicz, Lubomir POLITIKA STANÓW ZJEDNOCZONYCH I
WIELKIEJ BRITANII WOBEC POLSKI 1944-
1949 Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa, 1984

Zymierski, Marszałek Michał & Spychalski, Generał Marian
WOJSKO POLSKIE 1944-1947 : WYBÓR
ROZKAZÓW, PRZEMÓWIEN I ARTYKUŁÓW
Prasa Wojskowa, Warszawa, 1947

ARCHIVE SOURCES

Files At The Public Record Office, London:

- FO 371 : Political Departments : General Correspondence.
800 : Private Collections : Ministers and Officials,
Various (Bevin Papers).
945 : Control Office : General Department.
1049 : Control Commission for Germany : Political Division.
1052 : Control Commission for Germany : Prisoner of War
and Displaced Person Division.
1063 : Control Commission for Germany (British Element) :
Allied Liaison Branch.
- WO 32 : General Series.
106 : Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence.
170 : War Diaries : Central Mediterranean Forces.
204 : Military Headquarters Papers : Allied Forces HQ.
214 : Alexander Papers.
- AST 18 : National Assistance Board : Polish Resettlement.
- HO 213 : Aliens Dept : General Files and Alien's Naturalisation
and Nationality Files.
- CAB 128 : Cabinet Minutes from 1945.
CAB 129 : Cabinet Memoranda from 1945.

Files At The Archiwum Akt Nowych, Warsaw:

AAN 168 : Ministry of Information and Propaganda.
190 : Polish Repatriation Mission in Germany.
280 : Polish Red Cross.
284 : Polish Red Cross, British Section.
418 : Union of Settlers in the Recovered Territories,
Head Office.
522 : State Directorate for Repatriation [PUR].

OTHER SOURCES:

Hansard (Commons) and Weekly Hansard (Commons).

"Karta, Niezależny Miesięcznik Historyczny", Warszawa.
Article: "Rekruci", Październik (October) 1993.

Reuter's report from Warsaw, 0213 GMT, 23rd April, 1995.
RTU0081 3 QFE 1020 : BC-Worldwar-Poland (Political
Feature) "Sweet victory over Nazis had bitter
consequences for Poles" By Anthony Barker.

"Soldier - Magazine of the British Army": 28th November, 1994.

Sprawozdanie Stenograficzne: 1-25, Sejm Ustawodawczy
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Warszawa 1947) [Polish
version of Hansard]

Summary of World Broadcasts, BBC Monitoring, Caversham:
SWB 11 Nov. 1993 ee/1843 A/11 [31]

"The Economist", London.

"The Second Great War : A Standard History". Edited by
Sir John Hammerton. Published as a contemporary
partwork in 9 volumes. Parts are undated but run
from 1939 to 1945. (The Waverley Book Company Ltd.,
London.)

"The Times", London.

"The War Illustrated : Complete Record of the Conflict by
Land and Sea and in the Air". Volume One Edited
by Sir John Hammerton. A contemporary weekly partwork
from 16th September, 1939 to January 19th, 1940.
(The Amalgamated Press Ltd., London.)

TV Polonia broadcasting via Eutelsat 2 F6 (13.0°E) 11.428H GHz.

"West Sussex County Times", Horsham, West Sussex.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly I would like to thank to my parents without whose help, both financial and moral, this work would never have been possible and for putting up with me for the past four years - I'm sure it wasn't easy!

I would like to thank Professor Norman Davies, my supervisor at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, for his help and guidance towards the content of this work.

My thanks to the Polish Cultural Institute for allowing me a three month scholarship to research in Warsaw and to Ms Agata Szumowska for her help arranging the trip.

Finally I would like to thank Andrea Larkin and Ian Stokes for giving up their time to proof read my thesis. Their editorial suggestions and criticisms have been a great help.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Alexander of Tunis, Field-Marshal Lord Harold Born 1891. Commissioned in 1911. After serving in the First World War he volunteered in 1919 for Allied Relief Commission in Poland. He also served in Latvia and India before the outbreak of World War Two. In 1940 he was the last man to be evacuated from Dunkirk. From 1942 C-in-C Mediterranean then GOC 15th Army Group in Italy. 12/XII/1944 made Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean [SACMED] and promoted to Field-Marshal (back-dated to 4/VI/1944). From 31/VII/1945 Governor General of Canada. 1952-4 Minister of Defence in Churchill's Government.

Allen, William Denis Born 1910. Diplomatic Service from 1934. Far East until 1942. Acting 1st Secretary from XII/1944. Assistant to Hankey at FO Northern Dept until XI/1946. Councillor in Washington until IX/1947 when promoted to Head of FO German Political Dept.

Anders, General Władysław Born 1892. 1939 GOC Nowogrodzka Cavalry Brig. Arrested and imprisoned by Soviets. After Sikorski-Maisky agreement GOC Polish Army in USSR. VIII/1943 GOC 2nd Polish Corps. 26/II/1945- 21/VI/1945 Acting C-in-C PAF. After the war in exile in London. Died in 1970 and buried with his men in Monte Cassino Polish Military Cemetery.

Cavendish-Bentinck, Victor Frederick William Born 1897. Civil Service from 1919 as 3rd Secretary in Warsaw. From 1922 to Paris and other postings. II/1944 promoted Temporary Assistant Under-Secretary Of State and made Chairman of Joint Intelligence Committee. VIII/1945 Ambassador to Warsaw. 12/VI/1947 "Appointment Terminated". Replaced in Warsaw by Sir Donald St Clair Gainer.

Hancock, Patrick Francis Born 1914. At the FO from 1937. 1940-42 on secondment to Ministry of Economic Warfare. Promoted 2nd Secretary in 1942. Postings in Middle East. From 16/VII/1945 at FO Northern Dept as clerk responsible for Poland. Moved to German Dept as Assistant to W D Allen before being posted to Brussels XI/1948.

Hankey, Robert Maurice Alers Born 1905. With the Diplomatic Service from 1927. Postings in Berlin and Paris. In Warsaw from 1936. Promoted 1st Secretary VIII/1936. From 17/IX/1939 in Bucharest then Middle East. 1943 at FO Eastern Dept. From VIII/1945 in Warsaw as Chargé d'Affaires. 12/III/1946 at FO as Head of Northern Dept. From XI/1949 in Madrid as Chargé d'Affaires. In Budapest from 1951.

Hills, Denis Born 1913. In 1936 worked in Poland for Polish cultural magazine. IX/1939 left Poland for Romania and worked there for British Council. Commissioned in 1940 as a Liaison Officer in 26 BLU, attached to Kopański's 'Carpathian' Lancers in Egypt. VIII/1942 assigned to 5th 'Kresowa' Infantry Div. Took part in the assault on Monte Cassino. II/1945 began work with repatriation of 'Surrendered Enemy Personnel' first Turkoman, then Ukrainian and VIII/1946 Russians, as part of Operation Keelhaul. A man at odds with the military establishment, he was court-martialled three times. Many "Soviet citizens" owe their lives to Hills' efforts to prevent British forced repatriation to the USSR.

Komorowski, General Tadeusz "Bór" Born 1897. 1939 CO Central Cavalry School. After fall of Poland joined resistance. Made CO Kraków District. General from 1940. VIII/1941-VII/1943 AK Second-in-Command. From 17/VII/1943 GOC AK. Led the Warsaw Rising then German captivity; POW in Colditz. 30/IX/1944 until 5/V/1945 C-in-C PAF.

Kot, Stanisław Born 1885. Studied in Lwów and France. Major Gawronski, Liaison Section AFHQ, presented a report about Kot, a former history professor in Kraków: "There he dabbled in local politics in opposition to the Government. He made a mess of it and lost his chair. That made him embittered. He is shrewd and very active, but a destructive rather than a constructive mentality. He is a party politician and his interests more personal than national." [see PRO: FO371/47609 NL3379, 1/IX/1945] From 1941-42 Ambassador to USSR. Minister of Information during the Katyń discovery and seen by many as responsible for the breakdown of Polish-Soviet relations. Returned to Poland after the War. 1945-47 Ambassador in Rome after which in exile in UK.

Kuropieska, Colonel (later General) Józef Born 1904. September 1939, staff officer Kraków Army. Captured by Germans; POW in Oflag Murnau. 1945 returned to Poland. 1945-7 Military Attaché in London. Recalled to Poland. 1950 victim of the Stalinist purges - prison until 1956. After release and rehabilitation GOC Warsaw Military District then GOC Polish Staff Academy until retirement in 1968.

Mikołajczyk, Stanisław Born 1901. Politician. Founder and leader of PSL. During the war in the Council of Ministers of the exile government. After Sikorski's death in 1943 made Premier. 1944 resigned and returned to Poland to join the Provisional Government as Vice-Premier and Minister of Agriculture. Resigned after the falsified elections of 1947 and fearing arrest secretly left Poland in October of that year. From 1948 President of PSL in exile.

Modelski, General Izydor Born 1889. In 1939 he came out of retirement as an aide to the Minister for Military Affairs. XI/1939-VII/1940 2nd Deputy Minister for Military Affairs. General from 3/V/1940. VII/1940-XII/1944 2nd Vice-Minister of National Defence. From III/1945 retired. VII/1945 returned to Poland. 15/X/1945 In UK as head of Warsaw's Repatriation Mission. Modelski eventually emigrated to the USA where he died in 1962.

Morgan, General Sir William Duthie Born 1891. 1942-3 Chief of Staff, Home Forces. 1944 C-in-C Southern Command. 1945 Chief of Staff to Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean [SACMED]. Replaced Field-Marshal Alexander as SACMED from 1945-7

Raczyński, Count Edward Born 1891. Polish Diplomatic Service from 1919 and posted to Polish Legation in Copenhagen. From 1922 Secretary in London until 1926. From 1932 Minister to the League of Nations. From 1934 Polish Ambassador in London until 1945. From 1941-43 Minister for Foreign Affairs in Polish Government in Exile. Remained in UK after the war.

Retinger, Józef Hieronim Born 1888. Historian and politician. Studied in Paris and London. After fall of Poland became one of General Sikorski's closest advisors and friends but after Sikorski's death in 1943 relations with Mikołajczyk were not so friendly. IV/1944 became one of the oldest men to parachute into occupied Europe as SOE dropped him into Poland to contact the AK. A controversial figure accused by some of being a British agent and accused by others of being too conciliatory to Moscow. After the war he remained in exile and largely abstained from Polish affairs.

Rudnicki, General Klemens Born 1897. In 1939 CO 9th Lancer Regt. Captured by Soviets. IX/1941-IX/1942 CO 6th Infantry Div. in USSR then Middle-East. IX/1942-XI/1943 CO 6th Brigade. X/1943-IV/1945 Second-in-Command 'Kresowa' Infantry Div. in Italy. General from I/IV/1945 and Second-in-Command, later GOC, 1st Armd Div. VI/1947 Joined PRC.

Sargent, Sir Orme Garton Born 1884. At the FO from 1906. With the Diplomatic Service from 1911 with various postings. 1925 Counsellor at FO. VIII/1933 Assistant Under-Secretary of State. IX/1939 Deputy Under-Secretary of State. From II/1946 Permanent Under-Secretary of State. Retired I/II/1949.

Savery, Frank Born 1878. From 1919 Consul at British Embassy, Warsaw. 1939 Consul-General, Warsaw. From 1939 to 1945 Councillor at British Embassy to Poland in London. From 1945 to his retirement in 1949 Adviser to the Foreign Office.

Świerczewski, General Karol Born 1897. From 1915 in Russia. Took part in October Revolution. From 1918 in Soviet Army. 1936-38 commanded a brigade then International Division under the pseudonym "General Walter". From 1943 in Polish Army under Soviet command. From VI/1944 GOC Polish 2nd Army. From 1946 Vice-minister for National Defence. Nominated as C-in-C PAF but killed in a Ukrainian Insurrectionary Army ambush in III/1947.

Żymierski, Field-Marshal Michał "Rola" Born 1890 as Michał Żyźwiński. General from 1924 but cashiered from the Polish Army in 1927 for financial irregularities. Moved to France. In 1943 he became one of the founders of the "Polish People's Army" in the USSR and its C-in-C. From 1944-1949 also Minister for National Defence in the Provisional Government and then Polish People's Republic but replaced by Soviet Marshal Rokossowski. A victim of the Stalinist purges being imprisoned from 1953-1955.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

- 23 August 1939 : Ribbentrop-Molotov pact signed.
25 August 1939 : Anglo-Polish treaty concluded.
1 September 1939 : Germany invades Poland.
3 September 1939 : Britain and France declare war on Germany
17 September 1939 : Red Army invades eastern Poland.
5 August 1940 : Agreement signed to create PAF under British Command.
22 June 1944 : Germany invades Soviet Union.
14 August 1941 : Sikorski-Maisky agreement signed in Moscow creating Polish Army in USSR with General Anders as GOC.
13 April 1943 : German Radio announces the Katyn graves discovery.
25 April 1943 : Moscow breaks off relations with Polish Government.
4 June 1943 : General Sikorski killed in Gibraltar plane crash.
18 November-
1 December 1943 : Teheran Conference.
December 1943 : First units of 2nd Polish Corps arrive in Italy.
4 January 1944 : Red Army crosses the pre-war Polish border.
18 May 1944 : Polish Forces take Monte Cassino.
1 August 1944 : Warsaw Rising begins.
8 August 1944 : Polish 1st Arm'd Div. in action at Falaise.
18 September 1944 : Units of 1st Polish Parachute Brigade land near Arnhem as part of Operation Market-Garden.
2 October 1944 : Warsaw capitulates.
4-11 February 1945 : Yalta Conference.
21 April 1945 : 2nd Polish Corps liberates Bologna.
7 May 1945 : Germany surrenders.
17 July-
2 August 1945 : Potsdam Conference.
18 June 1945 : Provisional Government of National Unity set up in Warsaw.
5 July 1945 : France recognises the Warsaw Provisional Government.
5 July 1945 : Britain recognises the Warsaw Provisional Government.
5 July 1945 : Labour Party win British General Election.
21 September 1945 : "Plebiscite" for PAF repatriation organised by British.
15 October 1945 : General Modelski's Mission begins work in London.
14 February 1946 : Warsaw refuses to recognise PAF under British command.
5 March 1946 : Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton, USA.
20 March 1946 : Operation Keynote. Distribution of Bevin's text.
30 June 1946 : "3 Times Yes" referendum in Poland.
28 September 1946 : Polish Government revokes citizenship of Generals Anders, Maczek, Kopanski and dozens of other officers.
19 January 1947 : Polish Elections
31 January 1947 : PRC Bill - First Reading.
12 February 1947 : PRC Bill - Second Reading.
4 March 1947 : PRC Bill - Third Reading.
27 March 1947 : PRC Act - Royal Assent.
7 September 1947 : Enlistment to PRC opens at PAF GHQ.
11 September 1947 : General enlistment to PRC begins.

CORRIGENDA

The quotes taken from PRO WO204/711, PRO WO204/732 and PRO FO371/56374 N4382 are reproduced verbatim from their sources. The materials in WO204 are probably translations made by Captain Turowski, Chief Polish Base Censor, or they are written by the soldiers themselves in English. In the case of FO371/56374 N4382, the quotes have either been written by Polish soldiers in English on the "Keynote" text, or they are the Foreign Office translations of Polish comments.

Edited quotes should read:

PAGE LINE

- 80 11 Down : "At a time when the whole world rejoices..."
- 80 13 Down : "for a further war, which will bring..."
- 80 21 Down : "us! We are still soldiers and we are..."
- 113 7 Down : "Prime Minister Churchill wants to give us
British citizenship..."
- 115 3 & 4 Down : "We can believe this time what German
Radio says that the NKVD arrests..."
- 115 6 Down : "This is the truth of the Russian motto..."
- 116 8 & 9 Down : "want to fight with the Allied troops
against the Jerries."
- 156 5 & 6 Up : "the great disenchantment that the end of
the war brought them."
- 156 3 Up : "friends, but we Polish Airmen who fought..."